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NATIONAL REVIEW

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Cover photo: Ralf-Finn Hestoft/SABA

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NATIONAL REVIEW (ISSN: 0028-0038) is published bi-weekly, except for the first issue in January, by National Review, Inc., at 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. ©National Review, Inc., 1993. Address all editorial mail, manuscripts, letters to the editor, etc. to Editorial Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Address all subscription mail orders, changes of address, undeliverable copies, etc. to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P.O. Box 96639, Washington, D.C. 20090-6639; phone, 301-350-7258, Monday–Friday, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Eastern time. Adjustment requests should be accompanied by a current mailing label or facsimile. Direct classified advertising inquiries to: Classifieds Dept., National Review, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016 or call 212-679-7330. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 96639, Washington, D.C. 20090-6639.

RATES: $57.00 a year (25 issues). Add $21.50 for Canada and other foreign subscriptions, per year. (All payments in U.S. currency.) The editors cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts unless return postage or, better, a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

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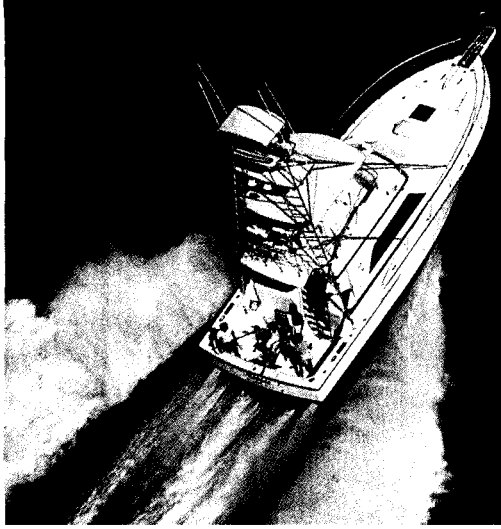

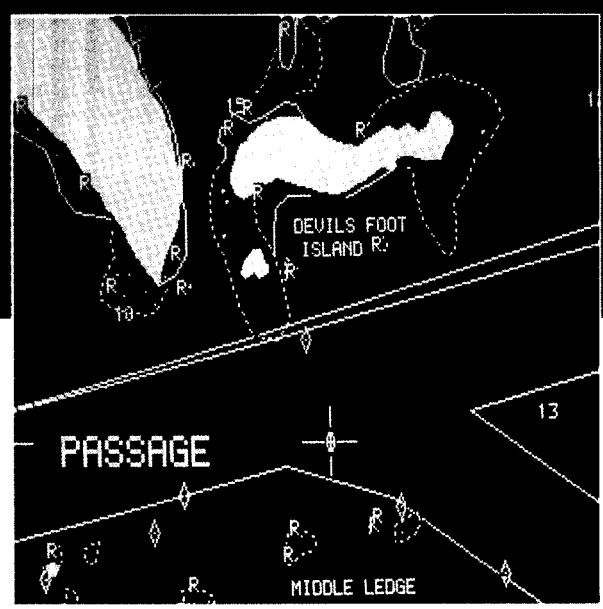

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LETTERS

A Conservative Corps

Allow me to introduce Mr. William F. Buckley Jr. Mr. Buckley is one of many unimpeachable conservatives—some others are Paul Weyrich, David Keene, Phil Gramm, Newt Gingrich, Bob Dornan, Trent Lott—who support the Police Corps as a non-bureaucratic mobilization of citizens for the purpose of self-defense against today's intolerable violence. These people do not think of the Police Corps as a Democratic idea, old or new. They are full partners in its conception, in its legislative sponsorship, and (I hope) in its passage.

Up to now ["The Week," Sept. 6], so has been NATIONAL REVIEW. I know you are highly displeased with President Clinton, but I hope you will allow Democrats to agree with you at least once in a while, especially when they embrace an idea that is deeply rooted in the best conservative traditions.

Adam Walinsky
New York, N.Y.

Decline of Journalism, Third Edition

An issue on journalistic decline shouldn't include a writer who misrepresents, misinterprets, and falsifies facts, all to advance his thesis. So what is NATIONAL REVIEW's excuse for publishing Michael Fumento's article on the response to his book *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS* ["Media, AIDS, and Truth," June 21]?

For example, he claims that data on heterosexual AIDS cases are inaccurate because all men in the U.S. born in Pattern II countries (Africa and the Caribbean) and diagnosed with AIDS after 1986 have been classified as being infected through heterosexual contact. Hence, "A man from Zaïre who had had sex with a dozen other men, shared needles, and had a blood transfusion would, upon diagnosis, automatically be put into the heterosexual category because of his origin." Actually, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that 17 per cent of AIDS cases among males aged 13 or older born in Pattern II countries and diagnosed since 1986 have been attributed to either homosexual contact and/or injection-drug use. In addition, Mr. Fumento leaves the impression that half of all heterosexual AIDS cases in the U.S. are attributable to persons born in Pattern II countries when, in reality, they make up less than one-quarter of the heterosexual cases reported through the end of 1992.

Another example is his claim that the media have ignored the fact that "most teen AIDS cases don't come from sex at all but from exposure to tainted blood products." This "fact" has been ignored because it isn't a fact. Through the end of 1992 most reported AIDS cases among 13- to 19-year-olds were due to unprotected sexual contact (40 per cent) as compared to 30 per cent from blood products and 21 per cent from injection-drug use. The fact is that the number of cases due to contaminated blood products has fallen steadily since all blood banks began testing donors for HIV antibodies in 1985. While it is true that AIDS cases among teens fell in 1991, Mr. Fumento neglects to point out that much of the decline was due to the increased safety of the blood supply. He also omits the fact that heterosexual AIDS cases among teens grew by 60 per cent in 1992, which more than offset the decline in cases due to blood products that year.

As a final blow to his case, CDC data show that AIDS cases among heterosexuals are growing faster than among any other group in the United States. The number of heterosexual AIDS cases diagnosed in 1992 was more than double the number diagnosed in 1989. As reported in a recent editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, a plateau has been reached in annual AIDS cases among gay men, but cases continue to increase in heterosexuals (mostly women) and injection-drug users.

An attempt to sell books may account for Mr. Fumento's continuing effort to discount the risk of heterosexual AIDS, despite evidence to the contrary. But the failure of editors to check facts in the articles they publish is another sign of the decline of American journalism.

Suzanne Bowler
Silver Spring, Md.

Steven Hirsch
Greenbelt, Md.

Unbeknownst to me, the AIDS computer base, which is accessible to only a few people in the country, does allow persons from Africa or Haiti to be classified as drug abusers. These data are not available to the reporters or libraries that subscribe to the quarterly and annual reports. At any rate, this doesn't change the point that all cases contracted in Pattern II countries are simply assumed to have resulted from heterosexual transmission unless proven otherwise. This is nothing but a convenient fiction to swell the heterosexual portion of the epidemic. And when Miss Bowler and Mr. Hirsch say that I left "the impression *that half of all heterosexual AIDS cases in the U.S. are attributable to persons born in Pattern II countries," they're admitting that I didn't say it. Right. My book clearly states the percentage of heterosexual cases from Pattern II countries. Why then would I be dishonest about it in an article?*

Actually, the percentage of teen blood and blood-product cases was 36 as of the end of 1992. Still, I should have said "most teen AIDS cases don't come from either sex category," but the point is the same. While the media portray virtually all teen AIDS cases as resulting from heterosexual transmission, only a minority are so much as attributed to that.

Wide swings in percentage terms happen readily when low numbers are involved. A town that experiences four cancer cases one year as opposed to two the previous year need hardly panic over the 100 per cent increase. My purpose in noting that teen AIDS cases actually declined in 1991 was merely to show the irony that in a year in which teen cases were allegedly exploding, they actually dropped. Specifically for 1992, the number of teenage AIDS cases was a grand total of 159, or one out of 151,352 of the total teenage population. That compares to 12,000 car-accident deaths among the 15-to-24 age group, or one out of 3,051. About half of these deaths and a vast number of crippling injuries could have been prevented if those kids had been thinking more about seat belts and less about condoms.

The heterosexual-transmission category has always *been the fastest growing, only because while all sectors of the epidemic have been following a bell-shaped curve to an eventual plateau, the heterosexual curve lags a couple of years behind the homosexual and intravenous-drug-abuser curves. Last year, heterosexual cases increased only 17 per cent, compared to 21 per cent the year before and compared to over 100 per cent a year for the first few years of the epidemic. How this constitutes a cause for panic—or an exoneration of the media and persons like*

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Miss Bowler and Mr. Hirsch who have fostered that panic—is beyond me. —MF

Harassing Questions

In his review of David Brock's *The Real Anita Hill* [July 5], Professor Jacob Cohen pointedly indicated that, whereas Judge Thomas did not take a lie-detector test, Anita Hill did. Since Miss Hill had effective control of the questions to be asked during the test, I thought it might be instructive to review precisely what questions were asked. It occurred to me that they might provide the "envelope" delimiting the allegations that Anita Hill felt she could truthfully assert.

The questions can be found in David Brock's book (p. 283) and are, briefly, a) Have you lied to me? (i.e., to the test administrator), and, Did Clarence Thomas discuss with you b) pornographic material, c) specific sexual acts, and d) the size of his penis? Omitted are any references to the time the conversations took place, the circumstances, the relationship between Miss Hill and Mr. Thomas, the effect on Miss Hill (was she laughing or crying when he was speaking?), etc. Questions such as "Have you lied to the Senate committee?" or "Did Thomas make sexual advances to you?" or "Were you employed with Clarence Thomas at the time?" or "Were you sexually harassed?" are all curiously omitted. Since it was Miss Hill who framed the questions, I would have to conclude that sexually explicit conversation did take place between Miss Hill and Mr. Thomas but not under the circumstances that would support her testimony.

Was it within the natures of both Mr. Thomas and Miss Hill to joke openly of sexual matters? Mr. Thomas had a reputation at Yale for "hilarious descriptions" of X-rated movies (as Brock quotes *U.S. News and World Report*, p. 268). Miss Hill has been referred to as "the world's kinkiest law professor" (p. 356), as comfortable with "sexual banter" and familiar with pornography (p. 357). When Mr. Thomas visited Oklahoma, Charles Kothe, the former Oral Roberts University dean, testified (p. 359) that Mr. Thomas and Miss Hill were "laughing uproariously." Hmmm.

James F. Gimpel
Collegeville, Pa.

In my review I did not argue that Professor Hill's lie-detector test was ideal; clearly it was not. David Brock made that point in his book, and I took his point. What I said was that if she is the complete and total liar that Mr. Brock makes of her, even that flawed test had its perils, and furthermore that Judge Thomas's refusal to submit to any test, even one which he controlled, certainly cannot count as a point in his favor. The rest of Mr. Gimpel's interesting letter supports my claim that there is an imaginable truth of what might have happened between the future professor and the future judge which challenges Mr. Brock's stark claim that nothing, absolutely nothing, of the sort that Miss Hill reported ever occurred. I felt he weakened the impact of an important book by being moralistically tone deaf to the kind of human possibilities which are speculated about in this letter. —JC

Government's Unfair Share

Concerning Mrs. Clinton's health reforms ["Unhealthy Reform," by Grace-Marie Arnett, Sept. 6], I have heard her rail against hospitals and doctors for "cost shifting," wherein the cost of charity care is passed along to paying customers and their insurers.

The most blatant example of such a practice is the government's health-care program itself. Medicare pays only a fraction of my cost in treating patients. No business can stay afloat while collecting less than what it costs to pay the overhead (the Federal Government excepted!). I have to pass along the costs to paying patients and am guilty, therefore, of "cost shifting."

Medicare does not pay its "fair share," another popular buzzword with the Clintons. Once again, government is the problem, not the solution.

Lynn E. Frame, MD, JD
Tulsa, Okla.

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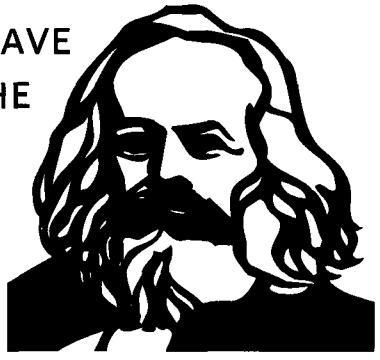
KARL MARX



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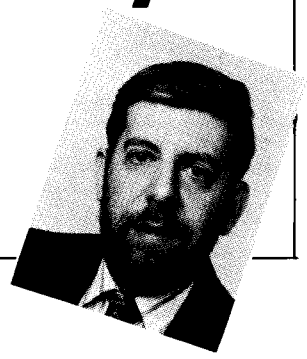

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Walter Williams, himself a distinguished professor of economics, sums up Dr. Sowell's achievement in the *Washington Times*:

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FROM THE EDITOR

As Others See Us

■ Our old friend, Jacques Delors—often described as "the President of Europe," although he is in fact merely an appointed bureaucrat whose real title is President of the European Commission—is at it again.

Stinging from the rout of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, which he hoped to transform into a single European currency, he recently denounced opposition to it as a "movement of ideas led by the Anglo-Saxons."

He was not alone. A great outpouring of Euro-federalist bitterness has been unleashed by the ERM's troubles. Indeed, Willy Claes—another "President," this time of the European Council of Ministers—detected an Anglo-Saxon conspiracy, no less.

"There is a kind of a plot," said Mr. Claes darkly. "In the Anglo-Saxon world there exist organizations and personalities who prefer a divided Europe, condemned to a secondary economic role, rather than a strong Europe with its own monetary and foreign policy."

Who are the guilty personalities? A spokesman for Mr. Claes referred vaguely to "financial circles" in London and the U.S., but came up with only one name: that of Mr. George Soros, the Wall Street financier and philanthropist, whose currency speculation had allegedly toppled the ERM.

But Mr. Soros makes an unconvincing member of any Anglo-Saxon conspiracy. Not because he is by origin a Hungarian Jew—Anglo-Saxonhood in this context is conferred by language and culture—but because the first victims of his speculation were the pound, the British government's ERM commitment, and the reputation of Prime Minister John Major.

(Of course, we Anglo-Saxons *may* have been trying a spectacular double bluff here. But aren't we supposed to be too bluff for that sort of thing?)

Anyway, if a conspiracy of Anglo-Saxon speculators had been behind the ERM's troubles, it would deserve general European gratitude, since the attempt to prop the system up was imposing unemployment rates of between 10 and 20 per cent on European economies with no relief in sight.

But no conspiracy was needed. The ERM collapsed for the reason all fixed-rate systems collapse in the end. Since European states had differing rates of inflation, growth, and interest, their currencies could not stay fixed in relation to one another. Currency speculation was merely the medium.

Yet Mr. Delors's criticism, if not Mr. Claes's, has a grain of truth. For there is an "Anglo-Saxon"—historically Anglo-Scottish, and in modern times Anglo-American—"movement of ideas," skeptical of government intervention and friendly to free markets, known as classical liberalism.

This tradition is regularly at odds with the dominant Continental traditions of statism, intervention, and protectionism over such questions as GATT and the Common Agricultural Policy. Europeans like Mr. Delors are aware of this clash but confident that their own statist philosophies are both more virtuous and destined to triumph. Hence, when something goes wrong, they attribute it to plots and machinations by Freemasons, Illuminati, or, in this case, "Anglo-Saxons."

The Anglo-Saxons themselves, muddling through, treat theory as so much hot air. So when the pound fell out of the ERM, British ministers saw this neither as a plot, nor as the malign result of a heretical "movement of ideas," but simply as an inconvenient reality that had to be lived with.

The distinction between Anglo-Saxon empiricism and French Cartesian logic is supposed to explain this. Or, in plainer terms: "An English fool is merely a fool, but a French fool is a fool who reasons."

■ But when I said some of this to Joe Sobran, he looked hard at me and replied: "How come you guys are always dismissing conspiracy theories?"

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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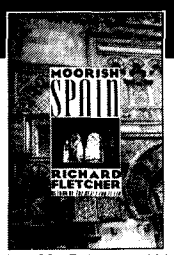

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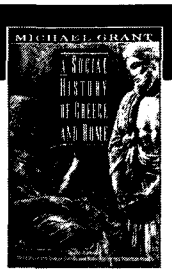

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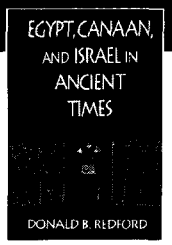

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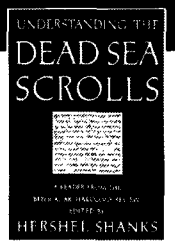

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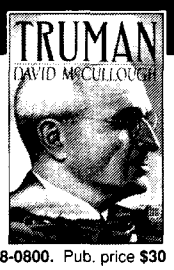

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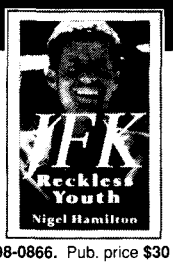

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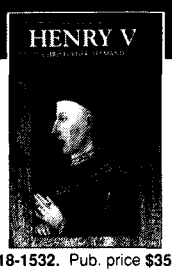

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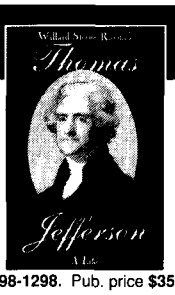

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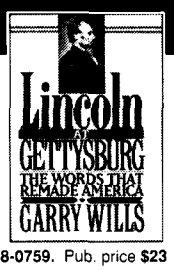

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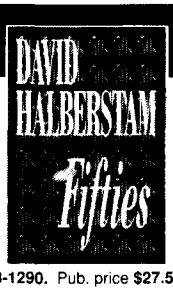

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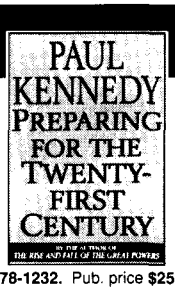

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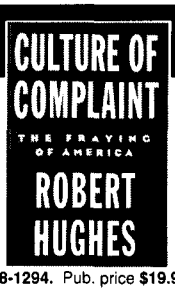

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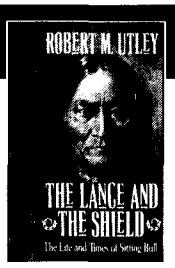

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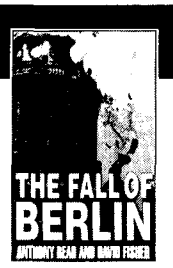

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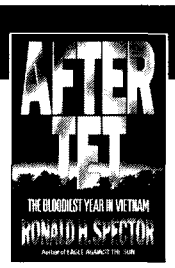

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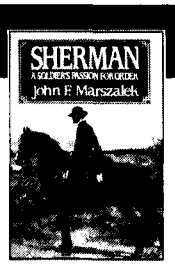

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FOR THE RECORD

■ Because Sen. **Daniel Patrick Moynihan** characterized numbers in health plan as "fantasy," Clinton Administration aims to route key provisions not through Finance Committee, of which Moynihan is chairman, but through **Ted Kennedy**'s Labor Committee. . . . Hawaii, whose health plan has been extolled by **Hillary Clinton**, has 11 per cent of population uninsured, compared with 14 per cent nationwide. . . . **Ralph Reed** has announced that Christian Coalition plans to use representatives in all fifty states to oppose plan. He adds that July CBS poll shows that 72 per cent oppose including elective abortions in plan. . . . CNN/*USA Today* poll finds that 59 per cent of Americans support Clinton plan, though 65 per cent mention increased government control as key drawback. Only 34 per cent support paying more taxes to pay for it. . . . Only 27 per cent thinks country is on right track, according to **Wirthlin** poll. Following health-care speech, however, President's approval rating rose from 43 to 50 per cent. . . . *Parade* magazine reports **Bill Clinton**, at 215 pounds, is third heaviest of all Presidents, behind **William Howard Taft** at 332 and **Grover Cleveland** at 260. . . . Pro-NAFTA forces are lining up **Lee Iacocca** as spokesman to counter efforts of NAFTA foe **Ross Perot**. UAW President **Doug Fraser** had strong words of praise for agreement recently. **Clyde Prestowitz**—a former Commerce Dept. official and leading Japan-basher—endorses NAFTA now because he thinks American firms in Asia will switch their operations to Mexico and import components from United States.

■ In Virginia gubernatorial race, Republican **George Allen** has surpassed Democrat **Mary Sue Terry** in polls by controlling debate on crime and Clinton. Meanwhile, New Jersey Republican **Christine Whitman** continues to stagger because she has repeatedly let herself get on defensive on welfare, gun control, and even taxes. CBS/*New York Times* poll has incumbent **Jim Florio** leading by 21 points. . . . Gov. **Pete Wilson** (R., Calif.)—who recently told *Human Events*: "I regret that I had to" raise taxes—said he'll *not* run for White House if re-elected to the statehouse in 1994. He did not say whether he'll run if *not* re-elected. . . . In 1991, Connecticut Gov. **Lowell Weicker**, in exchange for an income tax, agreed to a constitutional amendment limiting spending increases. Both governor and legislature have disregarded amendment and overspent; State Rep. **Mark Nielsen** and others have filed suit against them. . . . With surprise retirement of Sen. **Don Riegle** (D., Mich.), next year's GOP candidate will have to face a relative unknown, which is a more difficult challenge than scandal-ridden Riegle would have been. Conservatives in race are former state party leader and NRCC chairman **Spencer Abraham** and Detroit radio talk-show host **Ronna Romney**. . . . Victims-rights advocate **Donna Fournier Cuomo** was elected to the Massachusetts state legislature in recent special election. Her brother, **Joey Fournier**, was murdered by **Willie Horton** in 1974. . . . Ambassador to Holy See, **Ray Flynn** (former Boston mayor), is not intoxicated with Vatican job, according to his son and others, and is considering returning, possibly to challenge Republican Gov. **William Weld** next year.

H. L. Schwadron

■ *U.S. News & World Report* notes **Yasir Arafat** was bubbling with excitement at prospect of meeting **George Bush**. His elation survived Bush's razzing him by asking him **Saddam Hussein**'s view of agreement. To a question on why Israelis should trust his new political stance, Arafat replied: "Many didn't trust **Jesus Christ** in the beginning." . . . Syrian-backed **Ahmed Jibril**, of the formerly Soviet-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, says "we will seize the weapons from Arafat's police force and fight the Israelis." . . . Former East German Defense Minister **Heinz Kessler** was sentenced to seven years for the shootings of people attempting to climb Berlin Wall. . . . But former Communist Chairman **Erich Honecker**, now in Chile, still gets monthly $500 pension from West German government for the 14 years he worked as a roofer in Saarbrücken before the Nazis arrested him and later turned him over to the Russians. . . . The family of **Marlene Dietrich** has sold some 100,000 pieces of memorabilia for $5 million to fund a museum dedicated to her in Berlin.

■ **Clarence Thomas** will address **Claremont Institute**'s **Winston Churchill** dinner, on November 20. For info, call 909-621-6825. . . . **Institute for Republican Women** to hold conference on global politics and national security, on October 6 in Philadelphia. If interested, call 215-834-3515.

■ When radio talk-show host **Chris Craft** interviewed 1992 California senatorial candidate **Bruce Herschensohn**, she ended interview by kicking her guest out of the studio, accusing him of being drunk. Mr. Herschensohn went to police for a Breathalyzer test; test found him cold sober. Miss Craft was suspended and later released by station.

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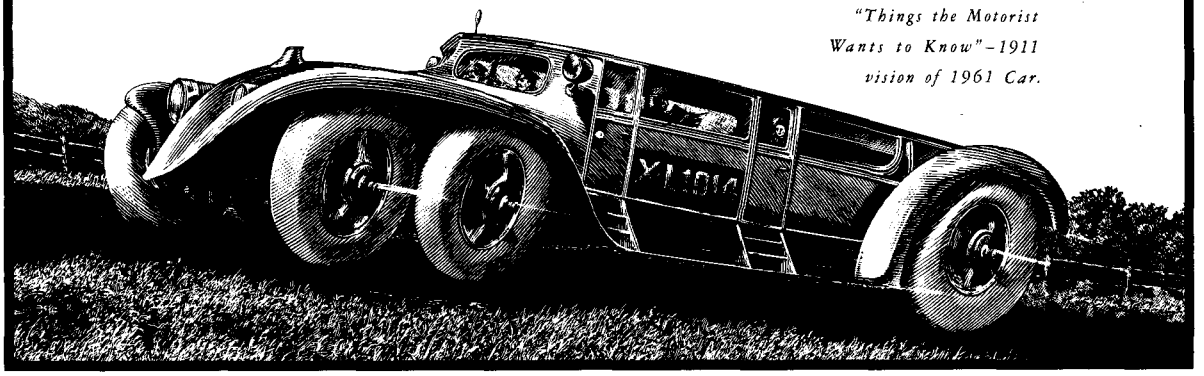

"Things the Motorist Wants to Know"–1911 vision of 1961 Car.

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THE WEEK

■ And what about the burden of national health care on small business? "I can't go out and save every undercapitalized entrepreneur in America," says the First Lady. She has found the Nineties idiom for "Let them eat cake."

■ Why should we suppose that health-care costs will decline given that the Clinton reform will increase health-care demand? Why, counters Mrs. Clinton, ask why? "When Franklin Roosevelt proposed Social Security, he didn't go out selling it with actuarial tables and books of regulations. He basically said, 'Look. Here's the deal: You pay in; you're taken care of.' . . . If he'd had to have been pressed to the wall saying, 'Well, what about the spouse who didn't work, and what about somebody who only worked 20 quarters instead of 24 quarters?'—I mean we would never have had Social Security." Or, to put it another way: a billion here, a billion there, and pretty soon . . . you're talking deficit reduction.

■ President Clinton has nominated a host of clunkers—from Boy Scout antagonists Roberta Achtenberg at HUD and Thomas Payzant at Education to condom queen Joycelyn Elders as Surgeon General and PC-appeasing Sheldon Hackney as NEH chairman. But that's not as distressing as the sight of Republican senators helping push them over the finish line. It might take courage and consistency to vote against them all (16 Republicans did manage it), but only a Democrat or a Republican addicted to Beltway compromise could vote for all four. Seven Republicans—Senators Chafee, Cohen, Durenberger, Hatfield, Kassebaum, Packwood, and Specter—nonetheless did so without apparent qualms. Three-time offenders include Senators Danforth and Jeffords—denied the status of Republicrats only by their non-vote on the Achtenberg nomination—Bennett, Roth, and, surprisingly, Simpson and Lugar, who aren't normally such pushovers. If most of these timid partisans were Democrats (or out of the Senate completely), what would be lost—except GOP support (Danforth on civil rights, Chafee on health care) for Democratic policy?

■ The Congressional Black Caucus has embraced Louis Farrakhan and announced a new partnership with the Nation of Islam. That it chose to do so in the middle of the Jewish High Holydays underlines what has been clear about the Caucus, and the current civil-rights leadership, for some time: namely, its alienation from most other Americans, black and otherwise. It did not deter the Caucus that Mr. Farrakhan has done little to dispel his reputation as an anti-Semite, but that is only one disturbing fact about him. Although they have engaged in worthwhile attempts to fight crime and drugs in inner cities, he and the Nation of Islam are devoted to a whole galaxy of conspiracy theories. Just the other day the *Washington Post* carried an adulatory front-page story about the Nation's "health minister," a physician in D.C. who argues that AIDS is the result of a government plot to carry out genocide on blacks. The majority of American blacks would consider that view as ludicrous as Mr. Farrakhan's famously expressed opinion that Judaism is a "gutter religion." The Caucus must edge back to moral sanity if it is not to suffer political isolation; breaking with Mr. Farrakhan would make a good start.

■ The Big Picture Award for September goes to: Harry Smith, co-host of *CBS This Morning*: "We have seen in the past, during the Reagan–Bush Administration days, when huge slashes went through, when entire programs were dismantled, and what ends up being left sometimes in its wake is the sort of vacuum and chaos and even more problems than were there to begin with." Now, just what is Harry talking about here? All that got "hugely slashed" thanks to Reagan–Bush initiatives was trucking regulation, oil price controls, and federal involvement in the freight railroad Conrail. All three deregulations have been such an unqualified success that they are hardly ever discussed any more. Airline deregulation, started under President Carter, has been a boon for air travelers. Sure, the airlines have been largely unprofitable recently, but as a recent Clinton panel pointed out this is attributable not to deregulation but to a perverse bankruptcy law that post-

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A view from Washington

FROM FARMS TO PHONES TO FUELS: NAFTA MEANS NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

At least 200,000 American jobs could be created by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)–but only if Congress passes it into law.

NAFTA could not only send lathes turning and computers churning, it could also get satellites spinning, brokers talking, vegetables moving, phones running and natural gas flowing.

The U.S. energy, telecommunications, agriculture, and financial-services industries– in addition to manufacturing–are among the many that could benefit from the expanded opportunities NAFTA would create. So could small business, high technology and professional services.

These opportunities are just a few of the reasons why Congress should pass the agreement this fall. With NAFTA on the books, the three largest nations of North America could enjoy the most expansive free-trade zone in the world–a market of more than 350 million people. U.S. business could be empowered to build and sell products made from the best goods and services America and its neighbors have to offer–but only if Congress passes the agreement.

NAFTA is designed to raise environmental standards at the same time it creates business opportunities. It calls for the "upward harmonization" of environmental standards between the nations. The side-agreements to the treaty call for improved enforcement of national environmental laws and the strengthening of international cooperation on environmental issues.

If enacted, the agreement could create opportunities in a long list of industries:

*NAFTA helps open portions of Mexico's state-controlled energy sector to competitive business practices and American energy service and supply companies. Natural gas exports to Mexico could quadruple by 1995.

*NAFTA requires Mexico and Canada to increase access to American professional services. Last year, American firms exported $8.9 billion of financial and other technology and professional services to Mexico.

*American semiconductor, computer, and aerospace technologies will be eligible for tariff-free entry into Mexico under NAFTA.

*NAFTA allows, for the first time, private and foreign ownership of independent electric generation plants in Mexico.

*America's bountiful harvest of agricultural products will be eligible for tariff-free entry into Mexico under NAFTA.

These sectors and many others would gain much under NAFTA, in part because Mexico's tariffs on imports from the United States average 10 per cent, while U.S. tariffs on Mexican goods average just 4 per cent. American businesses receive a greater benefit when these tariffs are reduced and eliminated.

Free trade represents the economic future not only of our continent, but also of our world. Barriers to trade are falling in every corner of the globe as nations realize the mutual benefits of open commerce.

NAFTA–negotiated by the administrations of both Presidents Bush and Clinton–will benefit Americans from all walks of life and in all areas of the country. On behalf of everyone who would like to fill the 200,000 new jobs the agreement stands to create in the American economy, Congress should pass NAFTA this fall.

Mike Baly

Michael Baly III
President,
American Gas Association

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pones almost indefinitely the closedown of failed airlines and the liquidation of their assets. If they were shut down, as the market requires, then the profits of the remaining airlines would improve as they gained passengers. By the way, Harry, budget "slashes" and "entire programs" in the United States are the work of Congress. The executive branch has not yet found a way to enact a budget, and seems to have forgotten how to veto one.

■ Can the spouse of a Cabinet officer achieve certified victimhood? Happily, yes. Professor Clare Dalton, wife of Labor Secretary Robert Reich, has successfully sued Harvard for sex discrimination. She was passed over when five male profs were granted tenure, and the rest is now history. Harvard settled out of court to avoid what its law-school dean called "a media circus," forking over $260,000 to help Professor Dalton (now at Northeastern University) set up a Domestic Violence Institute, of which she will be, naturally, executive director, and the staff of which will be known as the Rich Clares.

■ In its recent cover story on the "Endangered Family," *Newsweek* asserts that "the breakdown of the African-American family resulted from rising unemployment, not falling values." If only that were so! The black unemployment rate actually fell faster than that of whites or Hispanics during the Eighties, dropping to 11.4 per cent in 1989 from 20.4 per cent in 1982. This translates to 2 million more black workers at the end of the Reagan years than during PPresident Carter's last year in office. Intact black families did particularly well: in 1990, half had incomes above $33,784, the highest median income ever achieved by blacks. Unfortunately, the number of single-parent black families rose by 650,000, or 28 per cent, during the Eighties, while the number of intact black families fell. And more than half of all black single-parent families live in poverty. So it is fortunate that blacks appear to pay little attention to *Newsweek*. The magazine's poll found that 67 per cent of black adults believe "black families themselves" or "churches" are the institutions that can help black families the most. Only 14 per cent said "government."

■ Former Education Secretary and (*NR* Senior Editor) William Bennett came to New York City to endorse Conservative Party mayoral candidate George Marlin in his race against David Dinkins (Democrat) and Rudy Giuliani (Republican). Mr. Bennett spurned the man carrying the GOP label because he believes Mr. Giuliani has shucked Republican principles. Mr. Bennett cited school vouchers, for which he has been campaigning in California, and which Mr. Marlin supports, as an example of the Republican candidate's derelictions. He also called on Mr. Giuliani to meet the Conservative candidate in mayoral debates. Said Mr. Bennett, "It's the American way, it's Abe Lincoln's way, and good Republicans should welcome the free market of ideas," though that assumes they understand the free market.

■ "We reject the right-wing Republican philosophy that says if you can't afford it, you can't have it," thundered Mayor David Dinkins. Okay, so let's start with a yacht, a business jet, that emerald tiara that Muffy was so taken with, the 11-bedroom apartment on Park . . .

■ At midnight Saturday, September 18, the Chief of the El Paso Sector of the U.S. Border Patrol, Silvestre Reyes, initiated Operation Blockade to close the border to illegal immigration. Approximately four hundred border agents are physically on the border between El Paso, Texas, and Juáarez, Mexico, in any given 24-hour period. This high-profile presence has achieved remarkable results. Before Operation Blockade, one thousand illegal aliens were arrested daily in El Paso. That number is down to 125—and the local crime rate plummeted 30 per cent within the first five days. Not surprisingly, the citizens of El Paso overwhelmingly support the operation. Opinion polls conducted city-wide show an average of 95 per cent popular approval. (On the Mexican side, however, there have been demonstrations, including the burning of at least one U.S. flag, by Mexican citizens asserting their right to enter the U.S. illegally.) While Operation Blockade is scheduled to last for only two weeks, Chief Reyes is lobbying Washington to have it continue indefinitely. To date, this story has not been covered by ABC, CBS, or NBC.

■ Stephen Solarz, former U.S. Representative from New York, named by President Clinton as Ambassador to India, fears he may be paying a price for flippancy. When filling in his application form he came across a question as to who might be opposed to his nomination as ambassador. He entered: Saddam Hussein, Imelda Marcos, Kim Il-sung, Mobutu Sese Seko, and Pol Pot. He told journalists last week he

To Your Health

Twinkle, twinkle, little pie
Up in Mr. Clinton's sky;
How I wonder why the sell
Has a Lyndon Johnson smell.
Twinkle, but prepare to die
If you're an unfunded pie.

W. H. VON DREELE

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understands his FBI clearance is going to take up to three months. He wonders if the FBI has an agent pounding the pavements of Phnom Penh looking for a "Mr. Pot" and seeking an explanation of his concerns about the Solarz ambassadorship.

■ You read it here first: the results of Canada's federal election, due October 25, may be interesting—even very interesting. Kim Campbell, the Bush-style pragmatist who now leads the Progressive Conservative government, presided over a tripling of her party's support after replacing Brian Mulroney this summer. But it wasn't enough, and it hasn't lasted. Recent polls are showing the Tories with 31 per cent, trailing Jean Chrétien's Liberals, who score about 36 per cent. And the two regional particularist groups, Quebec's French-nationalist *Bloc Québecois* and Western Canada's conservative Reform Party, are both hovering around 12 per cent. (The socialist New Democratic Party has imploded; it is now down to about 7 per cent.) Recent Canadian elections have been very volatile (yes, really). Even so, these numbers would mean a minority government, with no party controlling the House of Commons and perhaps the *Bloc* holding the balance of power. If Quebec sovereignty is the price of *Bloc* support, Canada's Confederation would be entering its endgame. The moral for Americans: The persistent power of ethnic differences in the face of the severest multicultural and bilingual programs. Oh, and the utter uselessness of Bush-style pragmatism (the Reform Party is reportedly picking up surprising numbers of disgruntled conservatives even in Toronto). But we sort of knew that anyway.

■ One of the liberals' Cold War clichés was that the West exaggerated the Soviet threat. Now comes the startling revelation that the Soviet stockpile of nuclear weapons at its peak seven years ago was 45,000 warheads—12,000 more than CIA estimates and twice the number held by the United States. The only Western estimate that had it right was that of former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, who pegged the Soviet stockpile at 46,000. Mr. Weinberger's estimate was, of course, dismissed by liberal arms-controllers—and apparently by the CIA—as wild fantasy. The confirmation of its accuracy comes from the head of the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy. Mr. Weinberger is owed an apology; indeed he is owed so many apologies by now that no accurate count is really possible.

■ Katherine Ann Power, Sixties radical, has turned herself in to face trial for her role as an accomplice to the 1970 murder of a cop (and father of nine) during a bank robbery. After living in Oregon for years under an assumed name, Miss Power says she needed to clear the air in order to live with "full authenticity"—tempered by the proviso that the charge be reduced to manslaughter. One of the early rewards of her self-absorbed remorse was a cover story in *Newsweek*, which ended with this head-scratcher: "After all these years, it's hard to know whom to feel the most sympathy for: the children who lost a father, the family who lost a daughter, the young woman who lost her way in the tumult of the Sixties." Or the journalists who lost their marbles.

■ CAMPUS WATCH: Carnegie Mellon University student Pat Mooney declined to wear a black triangle button—denoting support for lesbian rights—during a "Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues" training session for dormitory Resident Assistants back in 1991. Four days later, he was sacked as an RA. "The incident with the button," wrote an administrator, "causes my concern that some discussions on emotionally heated issues result in your inability to be effective in the RA position." Mr. Mooney, a Roman Catholic who got high marks as an RA the semester before, suspected the trouble was his inability to take the *correct* positions on emotionally heated issues. This July, after an EEOC investigation, Mr. Mooney sued the university for discrimination on the basis of religion. Perhaps a topic for Carnegie Mellon's next "Roman Catholic Issues" sensitivity seminar?

■ Some members of the faculty at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst would like you to know that they do not necessarily endorse the view of their colleague, Professor William Kerrigan, that the faculty should deflower coeds who have "for one reason or another . . . unnaturally prolonged [their] virginity."

■ A new poll shows that 53 per cent of Americans favor President Clinton's health-care-reform proposal and 49 per cent are confused about it. This doesn't add up. The 49 per cent can be excused for their confusion, but that still leaves 4 per cent who favor the plan and yet claim not to be confused by it.

■ "It may not be too great a flight of rhetoric," *The New Republic* suggests, speaking of NAFTA, "to say that, at this crossroads of post–Cold War history, Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot represent the cause of evil." Then again, it may be.

Weighing NAFTA

SINGAPORE FELL, according to legend, because its guns were pointed out to sea, and the Japanese had the bad manners to invade by land. In the battle over NAFTA, an equally misdi-

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rected strategy is being employed by both the Administration and sympathetic media. They lob concessions at labor and Green protectionists among congressional Democrats to win them over, and they fire economic logic at simple-minded protectionists outside the Beltway like Ross Perot to discredit them. The second task is easy enough, since the principal protectionist claim is that if NAFTA goes through, U.S. investment and jobs will be sucked inexorably southward. In fact, by eliminating Mexican tariff barriers on American goods, NAFTA would *reduce* the incentive for U.S. businesses to relocate their factories inside Mexico.

But the first task is trickier. Most Democrats, unpersuaded by the concessions, are sticking with the AFL-CIO and the Sierra Club in their opposition to NAFTA. Which means the Administration must rely on Republicans who don't need persuading that free trade is a good thing, but wonder if NAFTA will still be free trade with Mr. Clinton's concessions. The Administration has no answer to that; its guns are pointed in the wrong direction, shooting down the arguments that free trade damages the environment and guts labor protections.

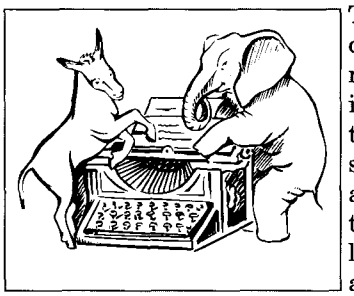
Even before the side agreements, however, NAFTA was not free trade, strictly speaking, but a managed-trade agreement. It reduced trade and investment barriers between Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. in a gradual and regulated way—"snap-back" provisions allow some reimposition of tariffs in case of "import surges"—but maintained existing national barriers against third countries. Indeed, it raised those barriers slightly by strengthening the "rules of origin" to ensure, for instance, that Japanese manufacturers could not gain tariff-free access to the American market by assembling autos in Canada from mainly Japanese-made components and then exporting them to the United States.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

■ **Pennsylvania**: Harris Wofford burst onto the national scene back in 1991 by defeating Attorney General Dick Thornburgh in the special election to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Republican Senator John Heinz. James Carville had Wofford stump across the state talking in the vaguest possible terms about the need for universal health care. The media dubbed his victory a "wake-up call" for George Bush, but Mr. Wofford's activity in Washington would lull anyone to sleep. The Clintons have unveiled a health-care proposal, and in no way has Mr. Wofford played a role in it. Some 37 per cent of his constituents want him re-elected; 43 per cent want someone new.

Republican Representative Rick Santorum plans to test him. Santorum was one of the "Gang of Seven," the conservative freshmen elected in 1990 who continually lobbed bombs at the congressional leadership in attempts to force full disclosure at the House bank, institute term limits, stop pay raises, and cut spending. Santorum ran his 1990 and 1992 campaigns on many of these principles. And surprise, in his initial victory, he got no help from the national party: except a phone call on election night. But thanks to his efforts in his first term and a half, Santorum has high name recognition and a strong financial base.

Bob Monahan, who owns a string of funeral homes, is also likely to run for the GOP nomination. Monahan, who lost an attempt for the State Senate in 1988, does not seem able to attract deep statewide support. There's also Barbara Hafer, the vocally pro-choice Republican who challenged Governor Bob Casey in 1990 and lost by more than a million votes (the largest margin in state history).



Santorum is a principled and diligent campaigner. In his first re-election effort, he carried a largely Democratic district with lots of money against him and with Bill Clinton carrying the national ticket. Since then Senator Wofford has given his vote to the Clinton tax plan. Without it, the bill would not have passed. Rick Santorum will be sure to remind voters of that next year.

■ **Missouri**: John Danforth's departure from the U.S. Senate after 18 years is no loss for conservatives. Danforth was the guiding force behind Super 301 (the 1988 protectionist measure), the 1991 Civil Rights Act, and the Cable Regulation Act. He also supported the disastrous 1990 tax hike.

Quickly jumping into the GOP field are two-term Governor John Ashcroft and six-term Representative Bill Emerson. Ashcroft has won five statewide elections in Missouri. Though he is more a cultural than an economic conservative, he is still a foe of high taxes. Bill Emerson, a staunch pro-lifer, has an enthusiasm for getting federal funds for local highway, water, and farm projects that should give pork-watchers pause.

On the Democratic side is a host of candidates known mostly for having been beaten by either Danforth or Missouri's other Republican senator, Kit Bond. Representative Alan Wheat and State Representative Steve Carroll are also in the hunt. None seems a powerhouse. In fact, Missouri, although it voted for Clinton by a 10-percentage-point margin and elected a Democratic governor in 1992 has been overwhelmingly Republican for two decades. (Indeed, the governor, Mel Carnahan, won in large part because of scandalous revelations about his opponent.)

Missouri voters have a happy habit of clicking John Ashcroft's name in the voting booth (63 per cent of voters did in 1988)—it wouldn't be so bad if they did so again.

—Geoffrey Morris

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The direct economic consequences are likely to be modest for America in both the long and the short term. First, U.S. tariffs are already low—on average 4 per cent—so that their elimination should not create massive job dislocations. One estimate is that the current round of defense cuts will displace ten times as many workers as NAFTA. Estimates of net job gains or losses are not only highly speculative, they are also trivial—a net gain or loss of 150,000 or so over 15 years in an economy which created 19 million jobs in the 1980s. Second, although Mexican tariffs are higher, at about 10 per cent, they have not prevented a sharp rise in U.S.–Mexican trade in recent years, in which the U.S. enjoys a substantial trade *surplus*. Third, the Mexican economy is only one-twentieth the size of our own. Even if the entire flow of additional Mexican investment—about $15 billion a year—were financed solely from U.S. sources, it would amount to only 1 or 2 per cent of our annual savings (and, sans NAFTA, would probably have gone to the Far East anyway). And, finally, because NAFTA *diverts* trade rather than creating it, there will be losers, but they are likely to be located mainly in third countries—for instance, Taiwanese manufacturers who lose ground in the U.S. market to less efficient Mexican producers, or European investors who are deterred by the rules of origin from setting up plants in Canada or Mexico. American consumers will be better-off than at present—but less well-off than they would be under a multilateral GATT deal covering the same ground.

And there's the rub. Because NAFTA's direct economic impact, though on balance favorable, will certainly be modest, a great deal rides on the wider long-term implications of the agreement. Milton Friedman supports NAFTA as a step toward genuinely free trade; Clyde Prestowitz, a shrewd "trade hawk" (neo-protectionist?), supports it as creating an extended domestic market which makes Mexico an "export platform" for America in the coming struggle for trade. Which of these views will prove correct? Will NAFTA with the side agreements, as described by Tom Bethell (p. 34), extend regulation as much as it liberalizes trade? Will it strengthen the free-market reforms in Mexico or overwhelm its burgeoning capitalism with First World labor and environmental rules that a developing country cannot afford? Above all, does it symbolize a confident America looking outward to its neighbors or a fearful America constructing its own trade fortress in a mercantilist world of trade wars? To these questions we shall return in the next three issues.

Stark Naked

Mr. Moynihan, holding his nose
At the health care the Clintons propose,
    Almost said on TV
    With an impish tee-hee
That the emperor's wearing no clothes.

W. H. VON DREELE

Less of the Same

THE CLINTON health-care plan and the Republican Party share an odd double mirror image. On one side of the glass is the Clinton plan, riddled with crippling practical difficulties concerning costs, bureaucracy, and the quality of care, yet sailing along before the breeze of the President's rhetoric. On the other side of the glass are the Republicans, with a workable alternative and an opportunity to take President Clinton to the woodshed on his cherished details; yet the leadership of the party seems content to offer only the weakest slogans of bipartisanship, including the age-old Republican promise to do the same thing, only cheaper. This imbalance of forces is what caused one anonymous Democrat to say that "the battle for socialized medicine has been won. All we're arguing about now is what kind of socialized medicine."

Who is responsible for the Republicans' rhetorical collapse? Senator Chafee gave the clinic away at the start by announcing that "nothing is non-negotiable." Employer mandates, for one, should be unacceptable to the GOP. But Senator Chafee would be just another Republican with a health plan if he did not enjoy the backing of Minority Leader Bob Dole. Meanwhile, House Minority Leader Bob Michel tapped liberal Nancy Johnson to give the Republicans' television response. And Haley Barbour, Republican national chairman, who knows better, ought to have avoided "commend[ing]" President Clinton for his bipartisan noises.

But the stage for this performance was set in the Bush years. As early as 1989 Stuart Butler and the Heritage Foundation had a health-care package that let individuals choose their own insurers, pay for them, and receive the tax breaks for doing so. It avoided cartels, global budgets, premium caps, and the rationing that would flow from them. But Richard Darman was crunching his budget numbers, and George Bush was expecting Lee Atwater to re-elect him. So nothing was done. The Democrats seized the initiative in 1991, and have held it to this day.

If Senator Dole and the other Republican leaders are hanging back in order to let Mr. Clinton blow himself out before making a countermove, then their strategy might be a sound one. But the countermove will have to be a sharp alternative, not a pre-emptive concession to an enemy who is assumed to have

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won already. The bureaucratic and fiscal consequences of the wrong decisions now will be with us for decades. It matters very much what kind of health-care package the American people get. We shouldn't endorse reform at any price just because the American public wants reform at no cost.

A New Russian Leviathan?

BORIS YELTSIN's dissolution of Russia's parliament may turn out to be an advance for Russia. It is unlikely to be an advance for Russian democracy. This is not because the Communist-era parliament was democratic. (It was not.) Nor because promised elections will not take place. (They probably will.) Nor because President Yeltsin's supporters are capable of lopping off heads when pushed too far. (They are.)

It is because Russia is simultaneously confronting four fundamental challenges: the construction of state authority, the development of a civil society, the establishment of free markets, and the creation of representative institutions. These challenges, awesome enough on their own, are overwhelming in combination. The countries that we now call liberal and stable had the luxury of confronting them in stages, yet even so, they were not always liberal or stable when confronting them. In Russia, the legacy of Communism multiplies the difficulties which these healthier societies have faced, while, paradoxically, the swiftness of Communism's collapse gives Russia less time in which to face them.

For these reasons, Mr. Yeltsin is entitled to Western sympathy. For the same reasons, the West must also maintain a degree of skepticism and detachment. Mr. Yeltsin's break with the "diarchy of power" is backed by a formidable mechanism of censorship, police, Special Purpose forces, and heavily armed troops. Those who command these powers may find themselves tempted, if not provoked, to use them—if not in the next few days, then in the next few weeks; if not in Moscow itself, then in Russia's outlying regions. Warm endorsements of the kind offered by most Western governments only strengthen that temptation. In a humiliated but proud country, they also strengthen the perception that the West is the instigator of Mr. Yeltsin's actions as well as his accomplice. Neither of these perceptions strengthens friendship or trust in the long term.

Although Mr. Yeltsin may not know it, his greatest trial will come if he succeeds. "Untie our hands, let us implement our policies, then Russia will become a normal country." This has been the *Leitmotif* of Russia's "democrats" since August 1991. Is it really so? Will the policies of Mr. Yeltsin's entourage—politically more centralist and economically more radical than those we have seen thus far—produce concord or turbulence? What will be the effect of bankruptcies and unemployment on scales unknown not only in Western Europe but even in Eastern Europe? Will the proletariat learn to love the market, or will Communism be plucked from the dustbin of history (as it was in Poland last month)? Will President Yeltsin find himself beholden to the "power ministries" which have given him so much support? Will a stronger Russia be more at peace with Ukraine, Georgia, and the Baltic states, or more of a threat to them?

On balance, we believe that it would be better for Mr. Yeltsin to succeed than to fail. But we also believe that there is a balance to be struck. It is time Western governments learned to strike that balance in their thinking and actions. Russia is neither our once and future enemy, nor our adopted offspring, but a foreign power. The months ahead are likely to confirm that foreignness.

Mr. Clinton at the UN

THE PRESIDENT had his turn at strutting about as a world statesman when he addressed the UN General Assembly on September 27. He made news by enumerating—in fairly restrictive fashion—the criteria for when U.S. forces would take part in UN peacekeeping operations: Is there a real threat? Does the proposed mission have clear objectives? How much will it cost? Can we envision a clear terminal point?

What you heard was the President trying to dampen enthusiasms that his own Administration had raised by its insistent gushing about "multilateralism." The new buzzword in Washington is "exit strategy," as in: "We need to have an exit strategy before we jump in." This means the U.S. should never send its troops into any kind of military operation without a coherent strategy that defines attainable goals and permits us to leave after attaining them. It is, of course, an excellent idea—whose wisdom has been brought home by the embarrassing failure of the Clinton Administration to have any such strategy in Somalia (where indeed it has been expanding the goals of intervention). Senator Sam Nunn has demanded that the Administration come up with such a strategy if Congress is to support its plans to send 25,000 U.S. troops to police a settlement in Bosnia.

The Administration is also backtracking, thank God, on its more general enthusiasm for multilateralism. Many of its mid-level foreign-policy wonks suffer from an unnatural affection for the United Nations. To them, the UN is not just an instrumentality of diplomacy that may be more useful to us

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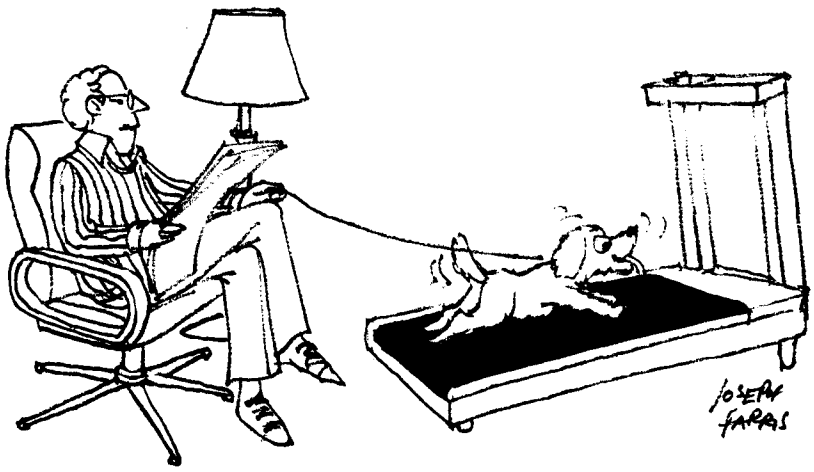
now that Soviet obstructionism is a thing of the past (for example, as George Bush skillfully organized a global coalition in the Gulf War). No, for these folks the UN is an ideological imperative: they see it as an advance of civilization for the U.S. to defer to the UN's ideas of when and where we should go to war, and to place U.S. forces under UN command when we do so. A major new presidential policy along these lines was cooking within the Administration until it leaked and provoked a sharp congressional reaction, including from senior Democrats like Robert Byrd. There's the small matter of the U.S. Constitution . . .



Mr. Clinton's UN speech came as the intended climax of a series of foreign-policy speeches by senior officials, from Secretary of State Warren Christopher to National Security Advisor Anthony Lake to UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright. The speeches were meant to impress with their vision, depth, and subtlety. The banality of what came out should perhaps reassure us—except that we know the Administration's inmost dreams are anything but banal, and are brought down to earth only by firm resistance from the rest of us.

No End of a Lesson

THOSE who hope that any settlement of the Bosnian crisis reached as a result of a territorial carve-up imposed at Geneva will bring peace to the former Yugoslavia are likely to be disillusioned. The internationally recognized sovereign state of Bosnia-Herzegovina will effectively have been extinguished, and there is still some doubt who will have lost most—Muslims or Croats. Media attention has focused on the fate of the Muslims of Sarajevo (besieged by Serbs) and those of Mostar (trapped by Croats). But in central Bosnia conditions for 150,000 Croats, cut off from supplies by Muslim armies, are even worse.

Certainly, the Croat and Muslim leaders might have behaved more sensibly. Whatever the short-term gains they hoped for from its rupture, the Muslim–Croat alliance was crucial to each party's survival. Yet sticking together would not have changed the basic military reality in a region where military power is now all: the Serbs remain far better armed than their opponents, who are impeded by the UN embargo from obtaining the heavy armor to defend themselves.

The Serbs have repeatedly tested international resolve and found it wanting. Indeed, the activities of the increasingly undisciplined and discredited UNPROFOR troops who have been presiding over the ethnic cleansing of non-Serbs from the occupied 30 per cent of Croatia (while Serbia drains oil out of Croatia's Slavonian oil fields to help it beat sanctions) have actually advanced the policy of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Military intervention in the form of airstrikes could have halted Serbia in its tracks. It still might. It would also bring an end to the fighting between Muslims and Croats, whose prospects of retaking their own land from the Serbs rather than squabbling for the remainder would radically improve. But at present Western policy remains based on appeasing Milosevic in his ambitions for a Greater Serbia. And what world-weary Western diplomats at Geneva fail to realize is that no one has yet defined the exact geographical limits of that concept—nor reckoned how many minorities and neighboring states will eventually fall victims to its attainment.

In Trouble? Yell 'Racism!'

VISITING New York for his UN address, President Clinton injected himself into the mayoral race between Democrat David Dinkins, the city's first black mayor, and his principal challenger, Republican–Liberal Rudolph Giuliani, a former prosecutor. Mr. Dinkins is thought to be losing a close race, though the city's voters are 5 to 1 registered Democrats. Mr. Clinton told a fund-raising dinner that Mayor Dinkins is in trouble because "too many of us are still too unwilling to vote for people who are different than we are."

The President then became even silkier: "This is not as simple as overt racism." We cherish that "overt." It thus must be "covert," perhaps even *unconscious*. No one is innocent, unless voting for David Dinkins. As Mr. Clinton went on dancing with

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words, a loud voice in the crowd yelled, "Tell 'em, Bubba." Everyone knew what Clinton was doing: Playing the race card.

In fact, Mayor Dinkins is in trouble not because he is black—he was first elected with a third of the white vote *because* he was black—but because his performance has done nothing to arrest the decay of the city. He allowed a violent and illegal black boycott of a Korean grocer in Brooklyn to go on for weeks without doing anything. His three-day snooze during the Crown Heights riots has been excoriated by an official report. An ongoing investigation indicates astonishing corruption in his police force. He supported the "Rainbow Curriculum" (*Heather Has Two Mommies*) that cost the school chancellor his job. Politically beholden to homosexual activists, he tried to force the St. Patrick's Day Parade to let them march *as homosexuals*. And so on.

A *white* Democratic mayor would be in trouble running on that record, as Mr. Clinton very well knew but chose to ignore.

Doubting Thomas

ONE WAY or another, *The New Yorker* seems determined to discredit Clarence Thomas. In a recent issue it ran a long attack on David Brock's best-selling book, *The Real Anita Hill*, then refused to print any part of Mr. Brock's detailed reply. Now, in its September 27 issue, it features a long article arguing that Justice Thomas's enduring bitterness over his confirmation hearings has driven him to dubious (i.e., flagrantly conservative) conduct on and off the bench.

The author, Jeffrey Toobin, quotes a "longtime friend" of Justice Thomas: "The real tragedy of this event is that his behavior on the Court has been affected. He's still damaged. He's still reeling. He was hurt more deeply than anyone could comprehend." As a result, Mr. Toobin surmises, Justice Thomas is determined to "outrage the liberal establishment" by associating publicly with conservative groups.

If we assume the truth of the unnamed friend's testimony—and it is at least plausible—the story Mr. Toobin tells undermines both Miss Hill's charges and *The New Yorker*'s acceptance of them.

Neither Clarence Thomas nor Anita Hill has acted as if those charges were true. Anyone who has been the target of crude sexual advances will recognize it as odd that Miss Hill should have gone out of her way, after Mr. Thomas's alleged obscenities, to associate with him, to phone him solicitously, even to follow him from job to job.

If those charges had been true, Mr. Thomas should have felt lucky to be confirmed. However painful his ordeal at the hearings, he would have subsequently accepted it as the price he had to pay for a career on the Court, and acted accordingly. Anger, a sense of betrayal, perhaps excessive bitterness, however, are exactly what we should expect of an *innocent* man, obsessed with clearing his name.

Mr. Toobin belittles Justice Thomas's tendency to see his own experience as emblematic of what he called, in a recent speech in Georgia, a "new intolerance" in this country. Our own view is that Mr. Thomas was perfectly right, and who knows the sting of that intolerance better than he?

But if Mr. Toobin is right—if Mr. Thomas *is* being self-pitying and obsessive about his experience—then at least it should be admitted that this is the behavior not of a liar who has barely gotten away with his lie, but of an injured man for whom even a seat on the Supreme Court is no compensation for the lasting stain of slander.

On the Road

O Mr. Tsongas; O Mr. Tsongas,
  Though we warn about the country going bust,
Debt and deficits still grow,
And without a girlie show,
  Can we wow the hoi polloi and upper crust?

O Mr. Rudman; O Mr. Rudman,
  I agree the subject rarely fills a hall,
But by sticking to routines
That were Gallagher and Sheen's,
We can sock it to 'em, Warren!
  Don't fall off the platform, Paul.

W. H. VON DREELE

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Memo to: Our readers
From: WFB

This is the tenth anniversary of *Catholic Eye*, whose founder (and editor/publisher) is *NR*'s James P. McFadden. Jim served as associate publisher of *NR* until withdrawing to give his full attention to the special problems of the Catholic Church and the pro-life movement. For the latter, he started *The Human Life Review*, a quarterly of discrimination, elegance, and learning—it was to it that President Ronald Reagan contributed his oft-quoted essay on abortion. But at the dear-sir-you-cur level, McF produces *Eye*, a monthly newsletter that gets in the ring with everyone—man, woman, child, priest, bishop—who wishes to transform the Church of Rome into a bi-sexual YMCA, with free condoms. It is a gloriously

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spirited 4-pager, commended to those inclined to a fighting faith, of whatever denomination. If you want to find out for yourself, write for a free copy: *Catholic Eye*, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

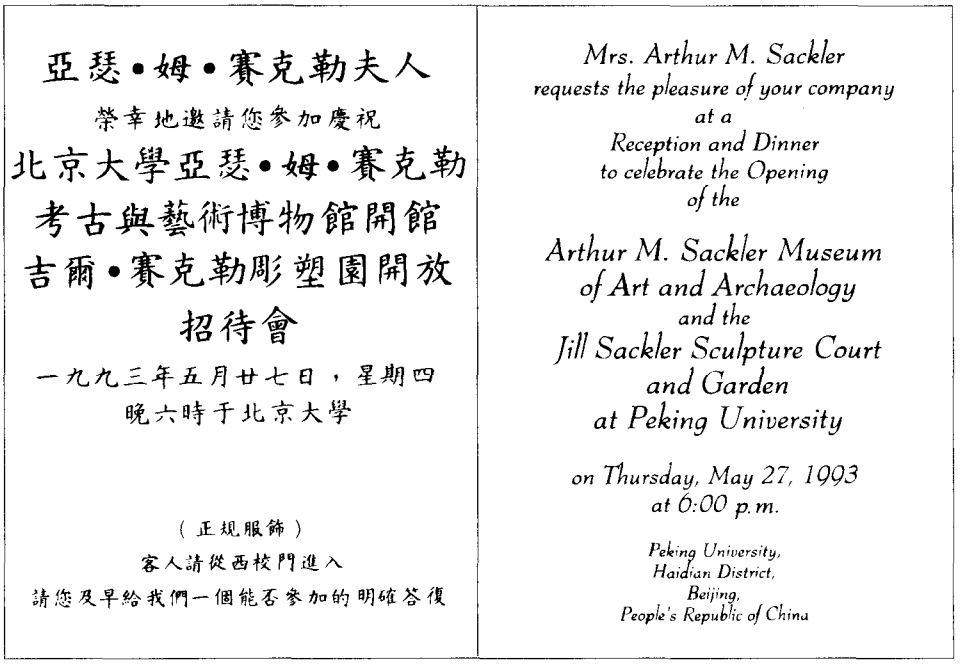
■ Memo to: Bill
From: Dorothy [McCartney]

I think our readers might enjoy seeing the questionnaire *Vanity Fair* printed in its September issue, under the heading: "Can a few simple questions sum up a life? That's the point of the Proust Questionnaire (named for Marcel, who took it twice). *Vanity Fair* updates the notion and tries it out on William F. Buckley Jr. . . ."

What is your idea of perfect happiness? Heaven.
What is your greatest fear? Hell.
Which living person do you most admire? Ronald Reagan.
What is the trait you most deplore in yourself? My failure to practice the harpsichord more regularly.
What is the trait you most deplore in others? Their failure to ask me to play the harpsichord.
What is your greatest extravagance? My lifestyle.
What is your favorite journey? Going home.
What do you consider the most overrated virtue? Introspection.
On what occasion do you lie? On many occasions.
What do you most dislike about your appearance? My gestating paunch.
Which living person do you most despise? Pol Pot.
Which words or phrases do you most overuse? "In due course . . ."
What is your greatest regret? I read slowly.
What or who is the greatest love of your life? J. S. Bach.
When and where were you happiest? Age five to seven.
Which talent would you most like to have? A retentive and comprehensive memory.
What is your current state of mind? Apprehensive.
If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? I'd like to know how to pray better.
If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be? I'd like it to be larger.
Where would you like to live? Where I live.
What do you consider your greatest achievement? NATIONAL REVIEW.
If you could choose how to come back, how would it be? Stillborn.
What is your most treasured possession? My faith.
What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery? The loss of faith.
What is your favorite occupation? The correction of other people's errors.
What is your most marked characteristic? Speedwriting.
What is the quality you most like in a person? A sense of humor.
What do you most value in your friends? Their companionship.
Who are your favorite writers? Wilfrid Sheed, John Leonard, Richard Brookhiser, Joe Sobran, D. Keith Mano, Murray Kempton.
Who is your favorite hero of fiction? Blackford Oakes.
Who are your heroes in real life? The people who overthrew the Soviet Union.
What are your favorite names? I haven't any.
What is it that you most dislike? Lousy logic, tempestuously waged.
How would you like to die? Painlessly.
What is your motto? *Quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi.*

■ Memo to: Bill
From: Frances [Bronson]

Look what just came in the mail.



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to celebrate the Opening
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and the
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and Garden
at Peking University
on Thursday, May 27, 1993
at 6:00 p.m.
Peking University,
Haidian District,
Beijing,
People's Republic of China

Dear Mrs. Sackler: Thanks so much. If I am in the area of Peking, I'll certainly drop by. Cordially,

—WFB

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ON THE SCENE

Unhealthy Numbers

BRIT HUME

Alan Nahigian

WASHINGTON, D.C.

ON SEPTEMBER 21, the President walked into an auditorium in the Executive Office Building to find a roomful of irate radio talk-show hosts. They had been invited to Washington for briefings on the Clinton health-care plan and were not having a good time. It had taken some of them forever to get past the front gate. Part of the problem was that security checks had turned up some felony convictions. A tough crowd, it seems, in more ways than one. But the Clinton White House was leaving out no one in its push to sell the health plan, even before its formal unveiling.

Eventually, they all got in, and many were back two days later to broadcast live from the White House front lawn. That did not go well either at first, because the White House neglected during the critical morning-commute hours to send its top officials out for interviews. Don Wade of WLS in Chicago was furious. "This has been a major mistake and a major blunder to bring radio stations here and treat us like this," he said. "The phone lines are bad. The communications stink. At six we're on the air and there's nobody from the Administration over here to sell their job." Eventually, James Carville, George Stephanopoulos, and Mack McLarty came out to make the rounds and pitch the plan. That seemed to help, even if they couldn't answer all the questions.

One reporter asked Carville, for example, why, if this is a plan designed to save money, it is necessary to raise more than $100 billion in new taxes to pay for it. He brushed off the question, saying he was no "numbah crunchah." Later, though, he told the reporter that it was a good question and he was going to find out the answer to it. Carville may not be a number cruncher, but he knows a politically troublesome question when he hears one. There were several such questions around well before Mr. Clinton made his impassioned address to Congress, and the subject of most of them was "the numbers."

The answer to the question that stumped Carville, of course, is that Mr. Clinton's plan isn't primarily intended to save money. Indeed, cutting costs is a means, not an end. The plan is first and foremost a whopping expansion of medical benefits. The White House estimates the total cost over the first five years at $350 billion. Of this, $152 billion will go to one politically potent and highly health-conscious group: the elderly. They would now be guaranteed free prescription drugs and long-term home and community-based health care. Most of the rest of the $350 billion is consumed by an estimated $160 billion in subsidies to businesses with fifty or fewer employees. The purpose is to help them pay for the generous health-insurance package they would be required to offer their employees under the Clinton plan. The Administration is understandably worried that this new mandate could overwhelm small firms and stall the engine that creates the bulk of the nation's new jobs.

Even with the subsidies, the Administration privately estimates 200,000 jobs will be lost, a figure some consider wildly optimistic, especially since Mr. Clinton is claiming that small-business job loss will be more than offset by jobs created at larger firms. Their insurance costs, he believes, will decline since their premiums will no longer reflect the costs of care for the uninsured. "There are bound to be job gains when you lower the payroll costs that a lot of major employers are paying today," he said.

The Administration proposes to pay for these new entitlements largely by wringing $238 billion in waste out of Medicare and Medicaid. That number, more than any other, evoked gasps of disbelief when a nearly final draft of the Clinton plan leaked ten days before his speech to Congress. Pat Moynihan called it "fantasy" and said his Senate Finance Committee would not use the figure in its deliberations. "We're going to be grown-up and serious," he said. The President insisted, however, that such savings are realistic. "Most people in Washington don't believe it," he said September 23, "but everybody I've talked to outside of Washington who is in health care believes it because they live awash in the waste every day. Everybody I talked to believes that."

The White House, though, was sufficiently worried about the credibility of its claimed savings that it sent virtually the entire economic-policy team out together on the eve of Mr. Clinton's speech. Bob Rubin, chairman of the National Economic Council, said, "There shouldn't be any debate on the validity of these numbers. They were developed with enormous care and enormous carefulness." Budget chief Leon Panetta said the Administration had developed "the most sophisticated models in the business of analyzing health care . . . there aren't any others, really, out there." Panetta, of course, was talking about computer models. All such programs are based on a multitude of assumptions about

Mr. Hume is chief White House correspondent for ABC News.

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how people will respond to new policies. Thus even the most sophisticated models are necessarily based on guesswork. Even Panetta acknowledged approaching such estimates with "humility and trepidation."

The Administration would like you to know that its claimed savings from Medicaid and Medicare are not "cuts" in those programs, but merely reductions in their rate of increase. During the budget debate, however, the White House repeatedly touted such curbs on entitlement growth as "cuts." Called on this, Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said, "In reference to the budget we used traditional scoring. . . . We didn't choose the language."

The sleight of hand goes deeper than language. In the budget debate, the President argued that his economic plan was only the first stage of a long-term strategy to reduce the deficit. Unless it was combined with a plan to curb the growth in health costs, he warned, the deficit would soon burgeon again. Health-care costs, he keeps saying, are growing at 14 per cent a year. Under his plan, however, they will grow at 17 per cent a year. That's why he needs $105 billion in new taxes. It's the only way, even with his huge estimated cost savings, he can claim his plan will reduce the deficit $91 billion over five years. And that's why Panetta, assessing the politics of the issue, said, "the deficit-reduction number is going to be vulnerable on Capitol Hill."

Panetta and Clinton repeatedly misjudged the mood on Capitol Hill during the budget fight and ended up with more spending cuts than they asked for or wanted. Many of Mr. Clinton's pet "investments" were casualties and he even had to agree to attend a summit on entitlement spending in Pennsylvania to get Representative Marjorie Margolies Mezvinsky to cast a critical vote to save his budget from defeat. Now he is proposing massive new health entitlements, and betting the ranch that the mood has changed. □

Yeltsin's Rubicon

DANIEL SNEIDER AND ELISABETH RUBINFIEN

Moscow

ON A CRISP Sunday afternoon, five days into Russia's political crisis, the White House, as the parliament building is known, was quiet. That morning, the deputies had lined up all along the second-floor balcony to assure the crowd of several thousand demonstrators that they were holding fast.

Already their numbers had visibly dwindled; many deputies had been lured into defecting by President Boris Yeltsin's open offers of favors, from apartments to jobs. "Deputies can't be bought," thundered Sergei Baburin, the goateed leader of the hardline Russian Unity faction. "They are traitors to Congress," he said of the deserters, "they are traitors to the people, they are traitors to democracy."

Baburin's rhetoric and the roar of the crowd—some waving the red flag of the Soviet Union, others the Tsarist

Roberto Parada

tricolor favored by the extreme Russian nationalists—could not conceal the painful reality. The White House had been effectively isolated, not only by the ring of troops surrounding it but by the Russian people's indifference to the fate of parliament.

President Yeltsin's September 21 evening address, declaring the dissolution of the parliament and rule by decree until new parliamentary elections in December, came as a surprise to many but not to the parliament's chairman, Ruslan Khasbulatov, or to Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi, the president's arch-foes.

The parliament quickly convened that night. The mood was euphoric. The deputies thought they had finally lured Yeltsin into a fatal blunder by forcing him to do what he had hesitated to do in previous crises—openly violate the Soviet-era constitution.

The Congress of Peoples Deputies was one vote short of impeaching Yeltsin last spring when he threatened a similar action. Now the deputies were sure they could rid themselves of Yeltsin and his reformers. This, they thought, was their August 1991, with Yeltsin playing the role of the putschists while Khasbulatov and Rutskoi stood on the tanks at the White House, with the masses by their sides.

Within a day, the mood had drastically shifted. The populace was passive, anti-Yeltsin feelings more than balanced by a deep dislike of the snarling deputies and their incessant feuding. The death blow was delivered by the "power ministries"—the army, the police, and the KGB. The heads of all three met Yeltsin on the morning after his speech, emerging to declare their support.

But Mr. Yeltsin is by no means finally triumphant. Almost any eruption of violence, even one provoked by the parliamentary rump, could reverse his political gains. Moreover, there are other forces that will be making their own bid for power. Already Yeltsin is being pressed from another front—the governments of the 88 regions and national republics which make up the Russian Federation.

The reaction of the regions is far from uniform. Several republics remain aggressively opposed to Boris Yeltsin. Even republics that generally support Mr. Yeltsin found themselves unable to go along with his blatantly unconstitutional erasure of parliament. Many are putting forth their own demands that both parliament and president submit to early elections at the same time, either in December or next spring.

Disturbingly for Russia's future as a state, many regions decided they were better off insulating themselves altogether from the chaos in Moscow. Sev-

Mr. Sneider is the Moscow Bureau Chief of the Christian Science Monitor. *Miss Rubinfien is a Moscow correspondent for the* Wall Street Journal.

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eral regional parliaments passed resolutions saying that central decrees wouldn't be observed unless they were ratified on the local level.

The conflicting pressures on local governments was exemplified in Nizhny-Novgorod, the town where Andrei Sakharov spent his years of internal exile (it was called Gorky then). Arguably the economic-reform capital of Russia, Nizhny-Novgorod is rare in that its local legislature and administration get along fairly well. Mr. Yeltsin's hand-picked governor was also a local favorite, the tall, dark, and handsome Boris Nemtsov.

Mr. Nemtsov has often criticized Mr. Yeltsin, though overall he has been a stalwart supporter. Nevertheless, on the day after Yeltsin's decree, Nemtsov decided that keeping the peace at home along the Volga River was more important than speaking out for the president in his Moscow battles.

The regional *soviet*, or council, passed a resolution condemning both the president and the parliament. It also voted not to implement any central laws without reviewing them itself. Folks on the street were unmoved by events in the capital and spoke trustingly of the wisdom of their local leaders. Governor Nemtsov decided at first not to buck the *soviet*.

That night, Mr. Nemtsov hashed over the day's events with a young Nizhny-based advisor from the International Finance Corporation, the Western aid agency. He was appalled to hear that Westerners might think he had abandoned his pro-reform stance because he wasn't strongly backing Yeltsin. "They can't be that simple-minded," Nemtsov told the advisor. But within a couple of days, the Nizhny-Novgorod administration had reversed its stance.

Mr. Yeltsin is intent on achieving the same result with other, even more recalcitrant, regional governments. But if a regional movement for an early-election formula takes hold, Yeltsin could find himself making deals he now sweepingly dismisses.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this crisis is the absence of popular participation, on any side. This is a battle fought almost entirely within the Russian elite. In this fight, Yeltsin has been heavily dependent on the men with guns. There is no sign, yet, of division among the security forces, although anti-Yeltsin sentiment is abundant in their ranks. But there is ample evidence that their aims are not the same as his.

Yeltsin and the radical reformers around him portray the dissolution of parliament as a step toward democratization, removing a Soviet-era institution that was dominated by former Communists intent only on blocking market reforms and Westernization.

For their part, the army, police, and KGB—not surprisingly, given their nature—talk only about restoring "order." Defense Minister General Pavel Grachev described the presidential decree as "an extreme revolutionary but necessary measure. It was high time to stop anarchy in Russia."

Security Minister Nikolai Golushko, a veteran KGB official who made his career in the Fifth Department—the branch that was in charge of crushing internal dissent—has spoken only once during the crisis. "We cannot allow a situation of dual power because it will damage the security of Russia and provoke bloodshed," he told Russian TV on September 22.

Yeltsin now is in debt to these men. We do not know yet when and how they will demand payment. □

Empowering Government

VIN WEBER

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHEN Congress recently passed, and President Clinton signed, the budget-reconciliation bill, it was little noted that they also enacted the nation's first enterprise-zone legislation. The bill allocated $3.5 billion to fund nine "Empowerment Zones" (six urban and three rural) and another hundred "Enterprise Communities" with lesser benefits. But most leading enterprise-zone advocates weren't celebrating.

Barry Sanders, co-chairman of RLA (Rebuild Los Angeles), called the Clinton plan "thin gruel for our poorest areas." No one, Sanders said, "establishes a new business . . . [in] a U.S. inner city to take advantage of 'inducements' like these." Senator Joseph Lieberman (D., Conn.), one of Clinton's earliest political supporters, complained that the President's program "guarantees that the vast majority of distressed areas in this nation will have no chance of being designated an enterprise zone." Former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp actually lobbied against the plan, calling it "a weak imitation of the enterprise-zone concept . . . [which] reveals an Administration with the most anti-capitalist mentality in this century . . ."

The enterprise-zone saga illustrates a consistent pattern in the Clinton Administration: the President has rhetorically embraced a wide range of empowerment proposals, including homeownership for residents of public housing, enterprise zones, and welfare reform. But the programs he has thus far proposed reveal not a bold, "new Democrat" agenda to help poor Americans, but what Kemp describes as "a throwback to the top-down, paternalistic policies which have dominated liberals' thinking on poverty since the Great Society."

Clinton named his zones "empowerment zones," while removing all the empowerment provisions from them. He touted his plan as the first real federal effort to help the inner cities since the Los Angeles riots. But the legislation he signed creates just nine zones that will receive any measurable benefits, only six of which are in urban areas. The one hundred "enterprise communities" are not enterprise zones at all; what they get is some $280 million in federal spending. "There are too few real zones and too many quasi zones," Senator Lieberman argued; he pointed out that with the same funding the Administration could have created "real zones" in 50 to 75 desperate communities.

Further, the tax incentives in the nine "super zones" will do nothing at all to help them attract scarce capital. Instead of eliminating the capital-gains tax on anyone who works, saves, or invests in the zones, the Clinton plan provides $2.5 billion in wage credits to employers operating there to encourage the hiring of local workers,

Mr. Weber, the former congressman from Minnesota, is co-founder of the new conservative group Empower America.

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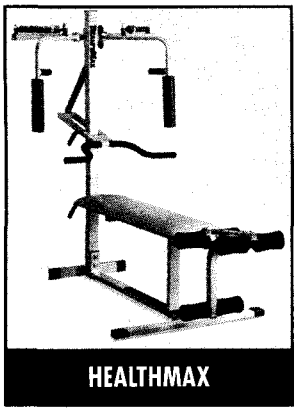

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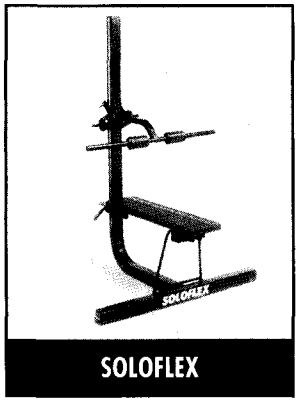

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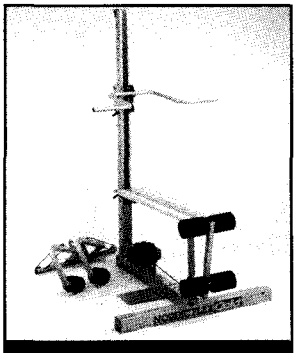

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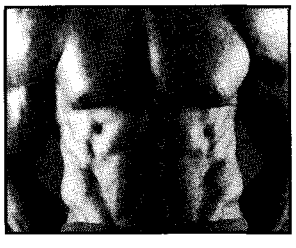

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and $720 million in social-service grants. But the wage credits will benefit only existing businesses—they do nothing to attract new investment in order to create new businesses in the impoverished areas and to help young businesses grow. As John Boyd, owner of a furniture-manufacturing company in South Los Angeles, recently told the *L.A. Times*, inner-city businesses have little use for the Clinton wage credits. "Right now, I can't grow and bring in a new product line because I can't afford it . . . businesses [here] do not have the capital to work with."

Far from empowering local communities, the Clinton plan dramatically expands Washington's role in the inner cities by creating a federal "Enterprise Board" to micro-manage the zones. To get benefits, local officials will be forced to present comprehensive community-development proposals to the board in Washington (made up of Cabinet secretaries and relevant agency heads). This flies in the face of the basic philosophy behind enterprise zones: empowering individuals and local communities by getting bureaucrats out of their way.

In addition to creating zones devoid of job-creating incentives, the Administration now seems to be turning to another old-style liberal jobs policy: increasing the minimum wage. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich is leading the charge here. In a July 22 memo to the White House, which was leaked to the media, Reich argued that the minimum wage should be increased from $4.25 to $4.50 an hour and recommended that it be indexed to inflation. This is apparently being taken quite seriously in the West Wing.

In housing as well, Clinton has promised empowerment and delivered more government. In his campaign manifesto, *Putting People First*, he promised to "make homeownership possible for more Americans through federal support for low-income long-term housing buyout programs." But his HUD Secretary, Henry Cisneros, has begun to dismantle programs which encourage homeownership for the poor, in favor of increased spending on new construction of low- and moderate-income housing and subsidies for low-income renters.

Cisneros has proposed dramatically increasing funding for HOME, a block-grant program which funds the construction and rehabilitation of public housing, to $1.6 billion—an increase of one-third. How is he paying for this? By gutting project HOPE (Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere), the empowerment program championed by Jack Kemp. In the Bush Administration's last budget, HOPE's 1993 appropriation was $351 million. The Clinton Administration has cut this to $300 million. For 1994, the Administration has requested a paltry $109.9 million. Essentially, the Clinton Administration is phasing out HOPE, barely funding existing commitments, and cutting off all new homeownership programs.

And now, as the President prepares to unveil his welfare-reform plan, it looks as if the same cycle could repeat itself. During the campaign, Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it." Since taking office he has repeated his support for a two-year time limit on welfare recipients. His HHS Secretary, Donna Shalala, recently stated that "the tragedy of our welfare system is that it penalizes work, stigmatizes recipients, and often locks families into vicious cycles of dependency. The President and I are committed to reversing this inequity and helping people live productive lives." Those are encouraging words.

To his credit, the President recently backed them up by persuading Congress to pass an expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit—a credit that supplements the wages of working families with children, rewarding personal initiative. But Secretary Shalala has recently tempered her support for limiting welfare benefits by stating that limits will come only after the Administration has put into place a plethora of new programs such as "job training, child care, and other support to help poor women." Miss Shalala has also talked of creating a "work support agency" to oversee these new programs, thus expanding the already massive welfare bureaucracy. And Administration officials have stressed that no reform will be possible until Congress passes the President's health-care plan, arguing that universal access to health care is an essential element of his welfare-reform program.

Secretary Shalala is right in one sense—placing time limits on welfare in a vacuum will do little to help move people off the welfare rolls. But instead of lifting the barriers to opportunity that face poor Americans, the Clinton Administration seems to be filling that vacuum with more and more government programs. President Clinton continues to speak of empowerment—but so far the only thing he is empowering is government. □

Lack of Solidarity

RADEK SIKORSKI

DWOR CHOBIELIN, POLAND

A COUPLE of days before our general election I was accosted by Pan Stasiu, our village drunkard, who occasionally chops wood for us. The authorities refuse to lock him up despite several minor prison sentences, perhaps because it's so obvious that he wants to have a few months of free meals inside.

"Which way will you vote?" I asked.

"I wasn't going to bother, but stand me a bottle of vodka and I'll vote any way you like." His eyes said earnestly that he would keep the bargain. I didn't take him up on it—it wasn't clear he was entitled to a ballot. In any case, $2 per vote—the price of the cheapest brand—seemed quite steep. What was clear was that the ideals of Jefferson, Mill, and Hayek were having a hard time filtering down to the grassroots in Poland.

Pan Stasiu's attitude suggested the turnout would be low, which would favor the hard Left, whose electorate is more disciplined. And so it came to pass. What I had been warning about for two years finally happened: a landslide victory for the former Communist Party and its allies.

The victory is widely attributed to a backlash against market reforms. But it is also due to avoidable errors committed by the new Polish elite, the former dissidents who have run the country for the past four years.

The backlash is real enough. When I asked collective-farm workers near

Mr. Sikorski, NR's roving correspondent, is currently based in Poland and England.

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my village about their voting intentions, their responses were almost uniform. "It was better under the Communists for us. Our rent was free, our jobs were secure. Now, we are destitute." They told me that children now steal sandwiches from one another at school, and asked me how they were supposed to buy coal for the winter on unemployment benefits of $60 per month. They are the losers in a reform which has also produced millions of winners. The losers have taken their revenge.

Curiously, the majority of Poland's entrepreneurs (60 per cent, according to one poll) also voted for the Left. Some probably reasoned like my local grocer, whose shop, which did not exist four years ago, brims over with brightly packaged products. "If people have more money, I will sell more," she told me, "and the Communists will give them money." Like millions of others, she has yet to learn the connection between increased money supply and inflation. Other entrepreneurs voted Communist because of their political roots. Some of the biggest beneficiaries of Poland's transformation are former *nomenklatura* bosses. Their fear is not inflation but a tough conservative government which would put a stop to abuses.

BUT neither backlash nor corruption were enough on their own to bring the former Communists back into power. Solidarity's original sin was committed in 1990, when Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Poland's first non-Communist prime minister, kept in place the half-democratic parliament whose origins lay in the roundtable agreement between Solidarity and the Communist Party. Had he called a snap general election that spring, after the Berlin Wall had fallen and the Communist Party had re-named itself, Poland would have elected an overwhelmingly reformist parliament and a government with a four-year mandate for fast reform. Instead, he prolonged the transition, leaving Communists in charge of the interior ministry and the army, giving them time to burn archives that contained compromising records and to transform their remaining influence into wealth.

During the transition period, that half-democratic parliament adopted a proportional-representation law which gave us 29 parties in the next parliament and a succession of weak minority governments. The first government brought in by a fully democratic election, the one led by Prime Minister Jan Olszewski, adopted soundly monetarist policies but was brought down when it attempted to eliminate former police informers from the civil service and parliament. The second, led by Hanna Suchocka, never managed to put its reform program through a fragmented, quarrelsome parliament. The reforms lost momentum and failed to bring potential benefits.

Secondly, blame for the election result should be laid upon Lech Walesa. He triumphed in the presidential elections in 1990 on a program of "acceleration," but then betrayed the New Right and made a pact with his former enemies—the old guard in the army, security services, and banks—whom he believed to be more powerful than his squabbling allies. A fortnight ago Walesa scandalized his former friends when he sacked a secret-service chief who had risked his life by leaking secrets to Solidarity in the crucial months before August 1980. If this man was disloyal to the Communists, Walesa argued, he could be disloyal again. Walesa's performance is reflected in the fate of his party, which barely scraped into parliament with just over 5 per cent of the vote.

The third cardinal mistake concerns the left wing of the former dissidence. Poland's overwhelmingly left-wing media set the tone of public opinion. Mazowiecki's government refused to purge the state television monopoly of old martial-law hacks. Most newspapers were handed over to cooperatives formed by their Communist-era journalists. Meanwhile, the newspaper originally created by the former dissidents, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, was seized by a clique from Solidarity's Left. Despite its anti-Communist roots, the *Gazeta* has used its influence to whitewash former Communists, General Jaruzelski in particular (this sounds less odd if one remembers that most dissidents were the children of prominent Communists). Instead of watching out for the resurgence of the far Left, the newspapers' editors beat themselves into a lather of hysteria about a bogus threat from the Right. *Gazeta Wyborcza* realized its blunder only a month before the election, when it was too late to affect the result.

The fourth mistake lay on the Right. Rather than unifying on a liberal economic platform, the Right divided over a number of other questions: over whether or not to weed former police informers from Poland's civil service, parliament, and media; over whether to ally itself explicitly to the Catholic Church; and most of all, over petty personal disagreements. As a result, none of the five right-wing parties has won enough votes to enter parliament, although taken together they got about 30 per cent of the vote.

Last but not least, Western politicians contributed to the result by treating all the post-Communist governments short-sightedly and meanly. Instead of giving Poland a set of tough conditions—and a credible calendar—for joining the EC and NATO, they treated her like an embarrassing country cousin. While Western newspapers were filled with supportive editorials, Western trade negotiators haggled over every kilo of strawberries and every ton of steel, and the Western diplomatic establishment did its best to avoid the topic of Poland's security isolation.

IN THE END, though, the Communist victory looks more dramatic than it is. The majority voted against the far Left, albeit for a dozen different parties. Nor does the far Left's victory herald a return to old-fashioned Communism. In fact, former Communist leaders appear to be dismayed by the prospect of taking charge. Their choice is unenviable. Either they pursue realistic budgetary policies and risk angering their electorate—the jobless, the pensioners, and the poor—or they try to satisfy the hopes that their promises of easy money have awakened, and risk a new backlash when inflation has eaten up the gains a year or two hence. Either way, this is likely to be the high point of the Left's popularity in Poland.

The coming period in opposition might be a blessing in disguise for the Polish Right, which now has the chance to shed incompetent leaders and unite. It should found its own professionally produced newspaper, and it must co-opt the new business class, whatever its origins. And the West might do well to decide once and for all whether it wants to integrate Central Europe or not, and what the price of rejection might be. □

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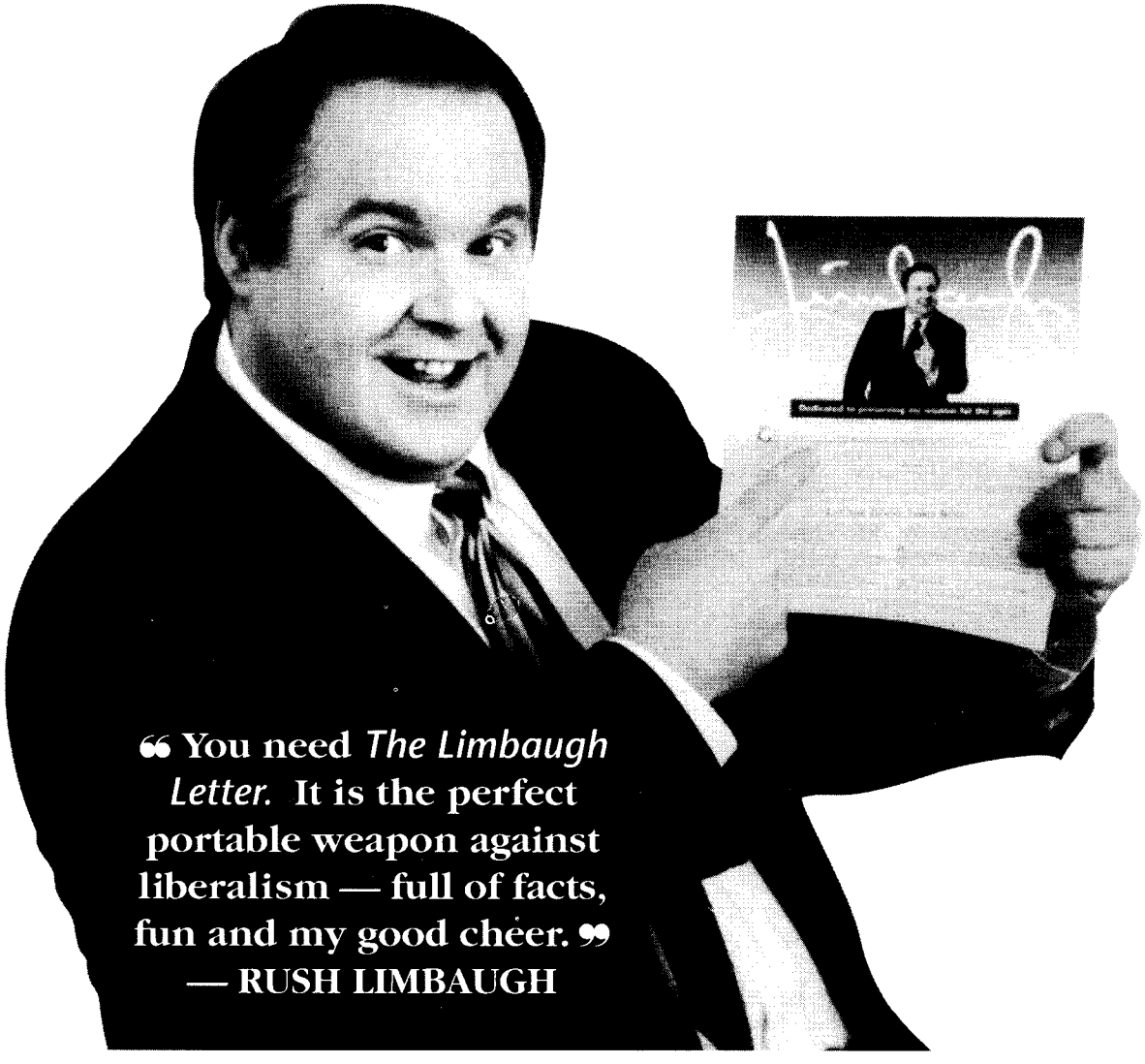
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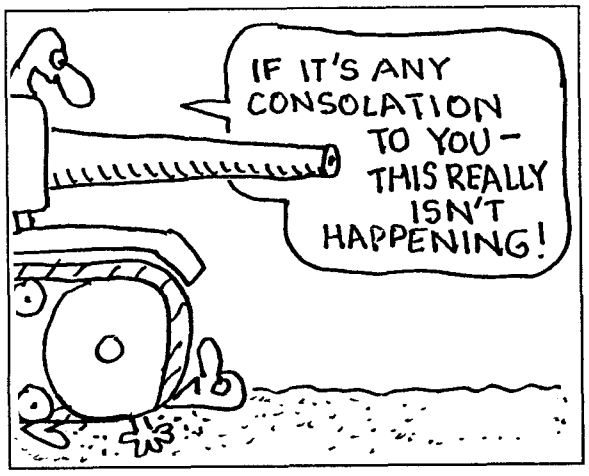

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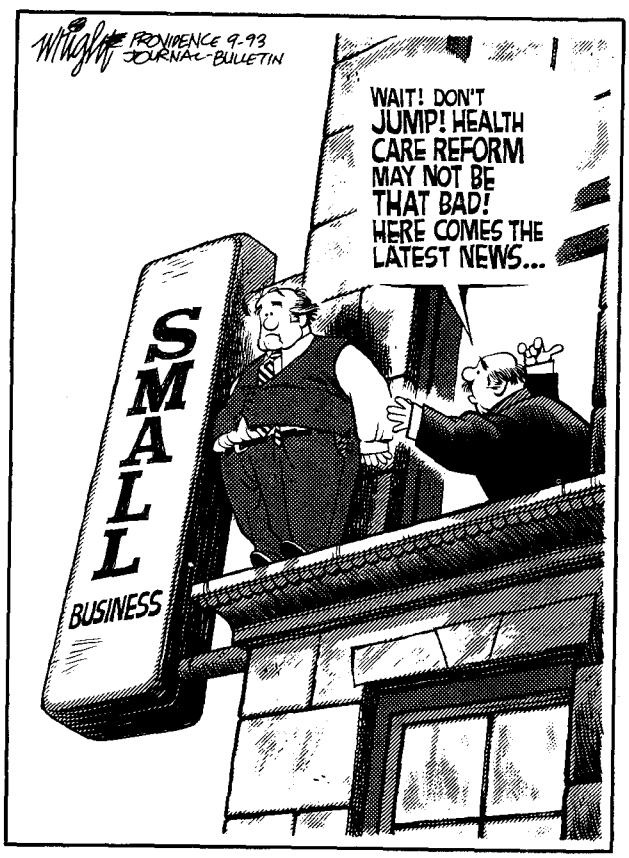
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Weighing the Balance

¿VIVA NAFTA?

Is NAFTA a free-trade accord?
Or have President Clinton's side agreements
turned it into a document locking us
into an international regulatory behemoth?

TOM BETHELL

THE FIRST thing to say about the North American Free Trade Agreement is that the protectionist attacks on it by Ross Perot, Dick Gephardt, Ralph Nader, Jesse Jackson, and others are nonsensical. Jimmy Carter was not exaggerating when he characterized Perot as a demagogue "with unlimited financial resources, who is extremely careless with the truth, and who is preying on the fears and uncertainties of the American public." The agreement will not create a giant sucking sound and it will not result in the loss of tens of thousands of American jobs. Possibly it will create jobs, as supporters maintain. But the jobs issue that has dominated the debate is a distraction. In searching for the good and the bad in NAFTA, the issue points us in entirely the wrong direction.

Cato Institute Chairman William Niskanen, a NAFTA supporter, finds the jobs issue "extraordinarily overblown on both sides," and doesn't think the agreement's effect on jobs is measurable. In general he finds the agreement "messy," with "an awful lot of junk in it," but still, "on net it is beneficial." Michael Kinsley of *The New Republic* is right when he says that "the person who will get a job because of NAFTA isn't even aware of it yet; the person who may lose a job because of it is all too aware." Robert Samuelson of *Newsweek* is right when he criticizes the idea that Mexico "will hijack our industrial base." If this were true it would already have happened. "Mexico's wages have long been lower than ours, and most of its exports already enter our market without any tariff," says Gary Hufbauer of the Institute for International Economics.

Milton Friedman of the Hoover Institution says: "I strongly support the passage of NAFTA, even though it does not go as far as I would like. It is mislabeled. It should be called the North American Managed Trade Agreement because it retains so many restrictions on free trade. Nonetheless, it is a step in the right direction . . ." Those who are skeptical of endorsements by economists should know that support for free trade is one of the few areas where liberal and conservative economists have been both in agreement and overwhelmingly correct (if you think that economic growth is a good thing and that monopoly is undesirable).

Mr. Bethell, an NR *contributing editor, was recently a media fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

The Catch

NAFTA'S goal is to reduce tariffs among Mexico, Canada, and the United States over a period of years, making it easier to trade goods across national borders, and increasing economic efficiency in North America. These goals are laudable, and if there were nothing more to NAFTA than that, it would clearly deserve the strong support of all who believe in liberty and free markets.

But that is not all. NAFTA comes with side agreements on labor and the environment, and yet another on "import surges." The latter permits a "snap-back" to pre-NAFTA tariff rates "if increased exports from Mexico are a substantial cause of, or threaten, serious injury to a domestic industry." In other words, a specifically protectionist provision has now been unambiguously written into a "free-trade" agreement.

These side agreements were not made public until September, by which time politicians of all persuasions had declared for or against the treaty: in so doing, they were totally dependent upon the interpretation of a small number of staff aides and think-tank researchers, some of whom had themselves only seen summaries of these documents. Representative Dick Armey, who supports the agreement, told me that he had not actually studied the legalese, but was relying on Joint Economic Committee staffer Edward Hudgins, who had. The same was no doubt true of all 434 other congressmen—

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WHY ALL AMERICANS SHOULD SUPPORT A MORATORIUM ON IMMIGRATION

FACT: More alien workers entered the U.S. labor market in 1992 than jobs were created, according to Immigration Service and Department of Labor statistics. America's disadvantaged workers suffer disproportionately from the steady influx of low-skilled, low-wage labor. The Zoe Baird incident was only the tip of the iceberg.

FACT: The Census Bureau now projects that there will be 383 million Americans in 2050, largely because of what *The Washington Post* describes as "massive immigration." That's 50 percent more Americans than there are today, and 83 million more than the Census Bureau projected just four years ago.

FACT: Thousands of illegal immigrants enter the country every day—2 million to 3 million a year. The law admits more immigrants and other workers than the economy can absorb. Fake documents are easily obtained, providing access to benefits meant for legal residents.

Our national political leadership is apparently unaware that a majority of Americans of all ethnic backgrounds favor reduced immigration (Roper Poll, May 1992; Latino National Political Survey, December 1992). In fact, immigration policymakers seem more concerned with pleasing the special interests than doing the will of the people they are elected to serve.

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except that many of them wouldn't even have had the services of Mr. Hudgins so readily at their disposal.

Armey told me that the agreement wasn't perfect but probably took us "as far and as fast as we can go in the direction of free trade" right now. He would have preferred a two-page document, he said, but the side agreements were more in the nature of "sunshine commissions" than "concessions of our own autonomy."

The principal concern is the side agreement on "environmental cooperation," which will create a Commission with an "aggressive and important workplan," a Council made up of the three countries' "top environmental officials," a Joint Advisory Committee, and, yes, a Secretariat. As the example of Maastricht has shown, the powers that such transnational bodies feel free to exercise within a few years of their creation can only be described as uncertain. In a speech to the House of Lords recently, Margaret Thatcher made a last-minute but unavailing attempt to derail the movement toward closer European union and loss of national sovereignty. "Thatcher declared she had been hoodwinked as prime minister into letting Britain slide toward a federal-type Europe," AP reported. " 'Yes, we got our fingers burned,' she said, accusing the EC of using a 1986 act that demolished trade barriers to sneak in regulations on everything from labor rights to water standards."

Something analogous to that just could happen with NAFTA. The environmental movement in the U.S. already has excessive power. Yet NAFTA will give it more—outside our borders. The key question therefore is: Will the new reach of the environmentalists prove harmless, as some say, or sufficient to offset the economic benefits of tariff reduction, as others claim? Even though the NAFTA debate so far has been heated, this controversy—among those who support free trade—has received little attention.

NAFTA is a "Republican" proposal, so it is said that Republicans logically should support it. But don't forget it is also a George Bush proposal; James Baker helped cobble it together. In 1992, his undersecretary of state, Robert Zoellick, praised the emerging treaty in a speech entitled "The New World Order Takes Shape." It was Carlos Salinas, the president of Mexico, who suggested a trade agreement to Bush, but the idea of a trading bloc appealed to him anyway as a "way to compete" with the (supposedly) united Europe (which had "hoodwinked" the Iron Lady). The uniting of Europe itself began as a free-trade proposal.

Bush learned at Yale that free trade is good, and his teachers were right about that; somewhere along the way he also learned that pollution is bad and that anyone who disagreed with that was probably a right-winger. To dissociate himself from such distressing views, he always wanted to give environmentalists what they wanted. Early on in the NAFTA-dealing, they in turn let it be known that they had the power to stop a trade agreement with Mexico, unless placated.

A long story in the *New York Times* in March 1991 was headlined "Border Boom's Dirty Residue Imperils U.S.–Mexico Trade." The reporter, Roberto Suro, traveled to Mexico, found "ominous" contaminated aquifers, and interviewed public-health specialists who were alarmed that rapid development south of the border was impairing workers' health. The *Times*'s solemn editorial warning appeared in the fourth paragraph (on the front page): "The pollution problems have become so grave that they have emerged as a major issue and potential obstacle to the free-trade agreement that President Bush wants to negotiate with Mexico as a way to compete economically with Europe and Japan."

This was a "major issue" that hardly anyone in the U.S. had heard of at that point—outside the leadership councils of the environmental movement. "Influential groups," such as the National Wildlife Federation, headed by Jay Hair, were opposed to the agreement, we learned. And for the White House's further information: "Democrats in Congress will resist efforts for a speedy approval of a free-trade agreement unless the White House agrees to address environmental issues in the negotiations with Mexico."

Enviros in Action

A WEEK LATER, more than twenty leading American, Canadian, and Mexican environmental groups announced that they had "joined forces" to demand that detailed environmental regulations be made an explicit part of any trade agreement. Stewart Hudson of the National Wildlife Federation (International Program Division) was quoted as saying that "as a matter of long-term strategy, we believe that macro-economic policies are the place where we can begin to install new styles of development . . . without sacrificing the environment." Translation: We can use this moment of leverage to extend our influence over economic policy—even unto foreign lands.

By April Bush was making the needed concessions. Thereupon Jay Hair wrote an op-ed piece for the *Times* telling enviros to trust Bush, to take him at his word—and to hold him to it: "He has made the commitment that for the first time in free-trade history, an environmental review will be part of the negotiations. This is a crucial step." From now on, he added, "free-trade pacts are inherently statements of environmental policy." Important new terrain had been captured. When the enviros had first "stepped into the free-trade discussion," Hair noted, they "were greeted with incredulousness by financial experts who viewed the talks as belonging to a closed club devoted exclusively to commercial considerations." Now they had won admission to the closed club, had been embraced by Bush. "His embrace is tentative," Hair allowed, "but that is less important than the precedent he has set."

In September of this year, environmentalist groups were reported as "split" on NAFTA, but it's interesting to note that the possibility of such a split was mentioned in the press as long ago as May 1991, when the NAFTA talks had hardly begun. Kathryn Fuller of World Wildlife Fund said, "If we can play a useful role, we will," while such groups as Greenpeace and the Nat-

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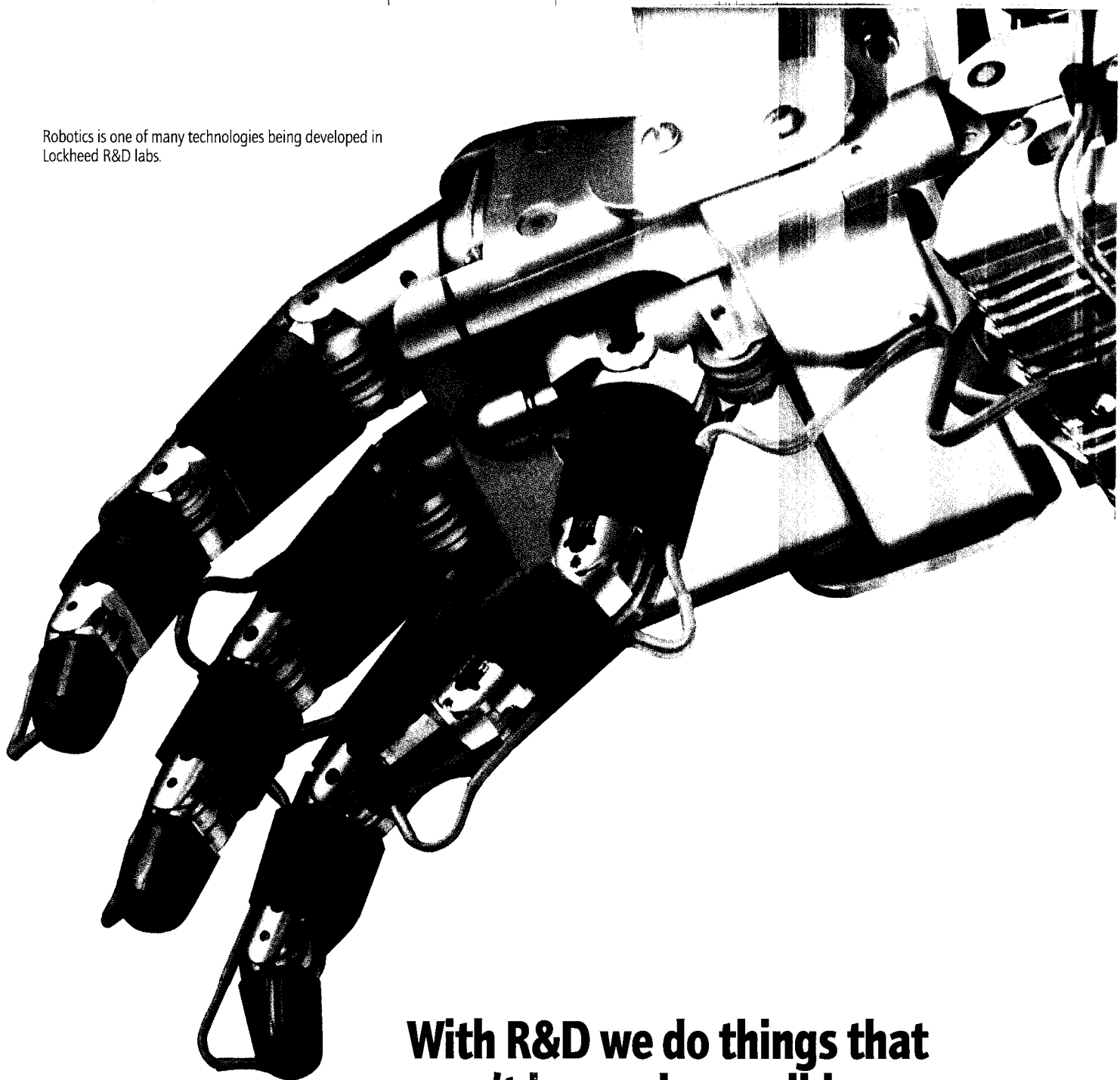

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ural Resources Defense Council were expected to take a "hard line." (In fact, the latter group is pro-NAFTA, the Sierra Club is against.) The willingness of the environmentalists to pursue such a good-cop, bad-cop strategy shows their political sophistication, of course. Conservatives wrongly imagine that "unity" wins the day in politics. Good cop Hair impresses with his reasonableness while bad cop Greenpeace demands more concessions. In failing to win them, Greenpeace also reassures free-trade supporters that the store hasn't been entirely given away to the environmentalists.

Stuck Forever?

NAFTA arouses two main concerns. The first is the loss of U.S. sovereignty—the possibility that we will forever be stuck with our current level of environmental regulation. An enlightened President five or ten years hence may try to sweep away some of these rules, only to be told that NAFTA makes such deregulation impossible—at least without the consent of Mexico and Canada. The second and perhaps greater worry for free-traders, though not for Ross Perot and others who object to NAFTA on nationalistic grounds, is the threat of U.S. environmental imperialism. Mexico may suddenly find itself saddled with a lot of laws it thought it could finesse.

Mexico has U.S.-style environmental laws on its books which it does not enforce. In a statement accompanying the side agreements in August, U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor said that these agreements would "help ensure" that "No nation can lower labor or environmental standards, only raise them, and all states or provinces can enact even more stringent measures." Four days later Kantor said that under NAFTA, "No country in the agreement can lower its environmental standards—ever. And if a country doesn't go after its polluters, we will."

Bill Niskanen said that these threats were not in the language of the agreement, while Representative Armey said, "I would not accept that position as enforceable; there are no enforceable sanctions against a country that does lower its environmental standards." He added: "Mickey is saying that more as an expression of principle than anything." Niskanen was concerned, however, that Kantor might be laying the groundwork for subsequent "expansive" interpretation. Lady Thatcher warned that, in her hoodwinking by the European Community, "many vague phrases in preambles and in things like declarations have all of a sudden been given authority when we thought they were harmless." Meanwhile, the GOP seems content to leave the expression of principles to those with bad principles.

The treaty cannot pass without strong GOP support, so what advantage has the GOP been trying to gain, while it still has the leverage?

"Quite frankly," Armey said, "the President is asking us to vote on our own initiative. I tried that with my wife once but it didn't work: 'What are you going to give me if you let me have my way?' "

When I asked someone in the trade representative's office where Kantor found the language to justify his statement, I was told: "I don't know where that is in the agreement," and was reminded that the side agreements had not yet been made public. That was on September 10. Another spokesman said: Kantor "simply means that we will harmonize up rather than down because some countries may have a lower standard of environmental protection."

Matthew Hoffman and James Sheehan of the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., who have played a major role in sounding the alarm about NAFTA among supporters of free trade, had told me that this phrase "upward harmonization" was being repeatedly used by people in Kantor's office, and now I was hearing it myself.

In response to Sheehan's criticisms, Jerry Taylor of Cato wrote a memo expressing "serious concerns about CEI's campaign against NAFTA," adding: "All I can say is that the only available text of the agreement stipulates no such thing, and in fact explicitly reaffirms the sovereign right of signatories to set their own domestic environmental standards. Clearly, Kantor is simply overselling the side agreement to the Administration's environmental allies, in a desperate bid to line them up behind the treaty."

"Arnold is a foe of big government. Of course, he's a foe of small government, too."

Hoffman and Sheehan responded:

> NAFTA's main text requires the signatories to "enhance the level of safety and of protection of human, animal, and plant life and health, the environment and consumers," and to "make compatible" their regulations "without reducing the level of . . . protection of human, animal, or plant life or health, the environment or consumers." Article 1114 also states that a signatory "should not" relax its environmental regulations "as an encouragement for the establishment, acquisition, expansion or retention in its territory of an investment or investor." After these major concessions, the en-

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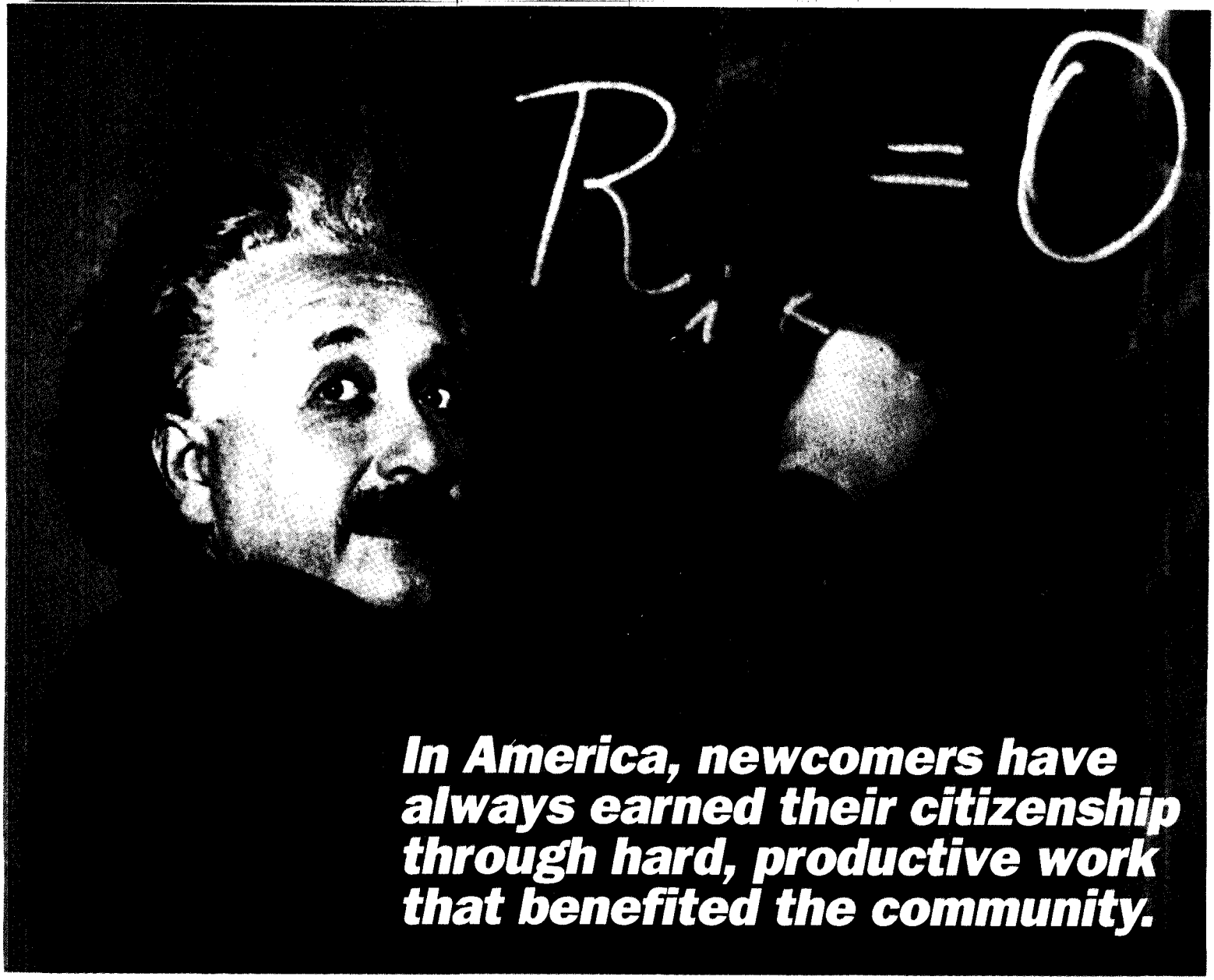
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vironmental lobby must have been surprised when the Clinton Administration capitulated to all of their major demands for NAFTA's side agreements. As demanded, the newly negotiated North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation obligates each signatory to "ensure that its laws provide for high levels of environmental protection and shall strive to continue to improve those laws."

The language may be more hortatory than compulsory, but may also be sufficient to give Sierra Club attorneys the green light. The Natural Resources Defense Council, made up of lawyers, has since put out a memo reassuring enviros that it does just that. I asked CEI President Fred Smith what he thought.

"Anybody who thinks the environmental movement is stupid about writing laws hasn't reviewed the history of Superfund and the Clean Air Act," he said. "The presumption is that all of these side deals don't matter. But if they are irrelevant they are also unnecessary." He worries that NAFTA "gives the environmentalists the power to cut themselves in on every economic exchange. It's very dangerous. They don't like trade and now they have been dealt in on trade arrangements. The big companies don't care: they have already paid the price so they are in bed with the environmentalists. There's something else going on here—bringing the U.S. regulatory apparatus to the Third World."

I mentioned the comment of Doug Bandow, a Cato Institute fellow who thinks that NAFTA is "marginally good": the environmentalists "have enough levers to regulate us into oblivion anyway," he said. "They don't need more."

"That's not true," Smith responded. "In international affairs they have not had those powers. Domestically, first they had strict regulations in California and then companies left the state; next the rules were harmonized nationally, and now some companies are creeping out of the United States. So the environmentalists are eager to extend their reach internationally."

The Earth Summit's Iron Fist

AT THE END of August, Pat Buchanan wrote a column taking issue with NAFTA on mostly irrelevant grounds (it expresses "the cult of efficiency," is supported by elites who "do not give a damn about the old republic," etc.), but then he quoted Senator Max Baucus of Montana as saying that NAFTA is "an iron fist . . . for turning Earth Summit's grand talk . . . into action."

"I wouldn't quote Max from any Buchanan column, especially with ellipses," said Baucus's press secretary, Tim Warner, when I asked him for the source. "Buchanan's just poppin' his mouth off." But he did say that Baucus was chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, "which he used as a bully pulpit, if you will, to pressure the negotiators to make sure the side agreements were strong enough to protect the environment." He had a September 15 statement of Chairman Max that he would be glad to fax.

Celebrating this "new breed of trade pact," and stressing "punishment for environmental abuses," Baucus's statement praised the side agreements as "flexible enough to address both known problems, and the unknown concerns of the future." The Commission "has the authority to investigate and report on" abuses, and, "even more remarkable, the side agreements *obligate* each country to enforce its environmental laws, and offers punishment if enforcement is ineffective. NAFTA gives the U.S. environmental movement a powerful spotlight to shine on Mexican practices, and gives the U.S. Government a means of compelling Mexico to clean up its act."

Meanwhile, Buchanan's office had sent me a Baucus column from the *Washington Post* (March 18). It promised that NAFTA's Commission on the Environment would be an "iron fist inside a velvet glove," and was the "best hope for turning the Earth Summit's grand talk about linking environmental goals with economic development into action." The side agreement was "a historic opportunity to extend environmental protections across this continent," Baucus added.

What if Mexico decides unilaterally to reduce or eliminate some of the laws on its books? Brink Lindsey, director of regulatory studies at Cato, assured me that countries could "set and change their substantive environmental standards," and were free to "make their own decisions on allocating scarce enforcement resources." In support of the first claim, he referred me to Article 3, Levels of Protection, which reads:

> Recognizing the right of each Party to establish its own levels of domestic environmental protection and environmental development policies and priorities, and to adopt or modify accordingly its environmental laws and regulations, each Party shall ensure that its laws and regulations provide for high levels of environmental protection and shall strive to continue to improve those laws and regulations.

As to the enforcement of laws that are on the books, Article 45 states that a Party has *not* failed to effectively enforce its laws where the action or inaction in question "results from bonafide decisions to allocate resources to enforcement in respect of other environmental matters determined to have higher priorities."

"So that's an enormous loophole right there," Lindsey said, "and a severe constraint on the ability of the U.S. to play the ecological imperialist with respect to Mexico." In addition, disputes can proceed only "if the U.S. and Canada gang up on Mexico." It has to be two against one. "Canada is steaming right now with the way we continue to use our anti-dumping laws, and with our customs audit finding that their Honda plant didn't have sufficient North American content. So it's hard to imagine Canada cooperating with us." (That's no doubt true now. But what about ten years from now?)

If the Commission on Environmental Cooperation decides that a nation is not enforcing its laws adequately, according to Sheehan and Hoffman, it has the power to set forth remedies, and the failure to implement these

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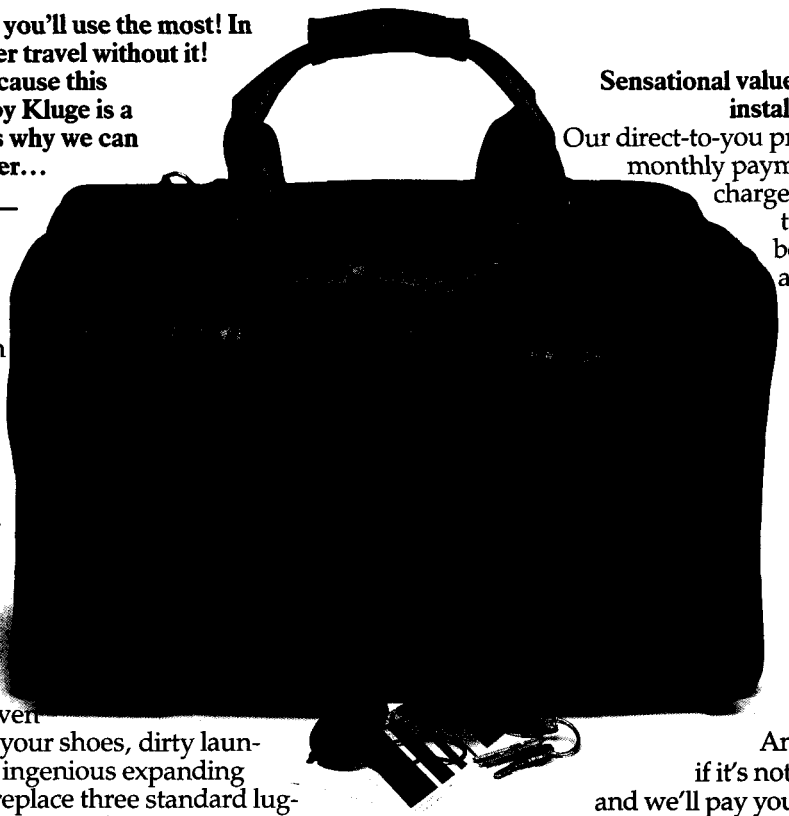

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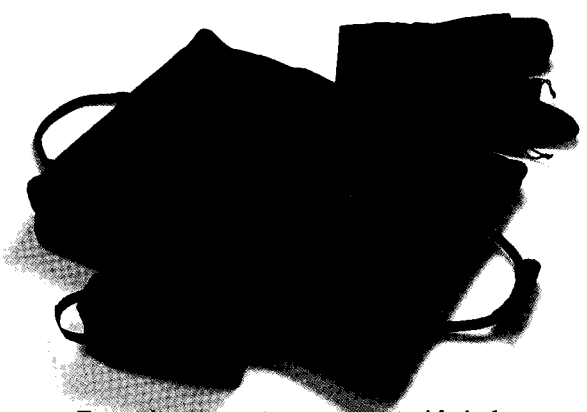

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will result in fines of $20 million per offense, plus trade sanctions. "The Commission will have a strong incentive to levy such fines, because it will be allowed to keep them for the purposes of 'environmental law enforcement,'" they note. Canada wisely refused to subject itself to trade sanctions under the side agreements.

The Politics of NAFTA

THE public continues to puzzle over confusing arguments and contradictory statistics about the alleged dangers or benefits of the North American Free Trade Agreement. The polite, unspoken assumption is that all the arguments and guesstimates are at least sincere. It is likewise widely assumed that Congress makes decisions on trade policy on the basis of the broad "public interest."

Because of these assumptions, the widespread proliferation of trade barriers was, until fairly recently, a mystery to economists. The benefits of specialization and of buying everything at the lowest possible cost are so obvious that economists thought that all that was needed was to explain this more carefully to legislators. Even when fairly plausible excuses for trade barriers could be imagined in a few special cases, this failed to explain the way trade barriers are actually applied.

Instead of temporarily protecting promising new "infant industries," for example, affluent countries such as the United States permanently protect senile, low-wage industries. Several academic estimates of the cost to consumers of each job supposedly "saved" by protection range from $100,000 to $300,000 a year—a lot more than the wages earned by each tomato picker or broom maker, paid at the rate of $6 to $7 per hour. Moreover, trade barriers do not really save jobs at all; at most, they simply slow the inevitable and desirable exodus of workers from declining industries whose products are not sufficiently valued by consumers to permit their suppliers to pay competitive wages.

In recent decades, economists have developed a theory that does a very good job of explaining the processes behind trade policy. This theory of "public choice," which resulted in a Nobel Prize for economist James Buchanan, has been quite effectively applied to the politics of international trade by such scholars as Gordon Tullock, Anne Krueger, Mancur Olson, and Stephen Magee. To see how public-choice theory can help explain congressional votes on NAFTA, it is useful to summarize some of its basic principles.

1. *Small groups exploit the large.* The larger the group, the smaller the benefits to each member, and the more diverse the group's interests. Very few farmers are permitted to plant tobacco or peanuts under federal license; each of those who are has a huge interest in preventing domestic and foreign competition. The resulting monopoly rents are paid by consumers in higher prices, but the cost to each consumer of the few cents added, say, to the price of each candy bar as the result of legislative favoritism seems too small to bother about, even though the total costs are huge.

Relatively small interests in the labor market also have a wildly disproportionate influence on Congress. The United Auto Workers at the Big Three auto-assembly plants, which employed only 191,000 workers in 1991, have far more clout than the 260,000 workers at thousands of nonunion auto and parts plants. Most workers, like consumers, are not politically organized and are thus vulnerable to political exploitation.

2. *It makes sense for voters to be ignorant.* It takes time and money to be well informed, and trade policy is unbelievably detailed and complex. Because each vote has only a trivial impact in an election, it would be irrational for voters to spend too much time finding out who is trying to gain legislative favors at their expense.

This principle, combined with the first one, indicates that voters should be suspicious of any individual or group claiming to represent "consumers" in legislative matters. Such "consumer groups" are often bankrolled by interest groups such as associations of trial lawyers or labor unions. All consumers benefit from the widest possible choice of products at the lowest possible cost—that is, they are the main beneficiaries of lower import barriers. Yet this is rarely mentioned by the many self-styled consumer groups or by government documents attempting to identify winners and losers from NAFTA (always meaning organized groups of producers, not consumers).

3. *Import-competing firms get more attention than exporters.* The damage that either foreign or domestic competition inflicts on inefficient, uncompetitive producers is quite visible. Television crews find "human interest" in interviewing those who lost their jobs from import competition. But often the greatest competition is from another city or state; consider the movement of textile producers from the Northeast to the Sun Belt, the movement of Jeep production from Toledo to Detroit, the production of Saturns in Tennessee rather than Michigan. Yet it is politically convenient, for firms making these decisions, to blame any resulting dislocations on foreign rivals.

While it is easy to see how free trade would hurt currently protected industries, the benefits of expanded imports under freer trade are less visible because they are more diffuse. Anne Krueger of Duke University calls this "identity bias." It takes some imagination to visualize potential exports, particularly from industries that would not even be created under a protectionist regime. "A textile worker or steel worker is more familiar to voters," notes Professor Krueger, "than is the unemployed person who would be hired were an export industry to be expanded."

Export industries suffer the additional problem that they are a diverse group with no other obvious interest in common. A small exporter of auto

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Mr. Reynolds is Director of Economic Research at the Hudson Institute in Indianapolis. This article was adapted from a paper prepared for the Fraser Institute in Vancouver, B.C.

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"Should we allow a supranational commission to determine what constitutes 'effective' enforcement of our own laws?" Sheehan and Hoffman ask. "If we 'effectively' enforced our misguided 'wetland' policies, which have the potential to shut down development on millions of acres of land, what would the impact be? If,

glass based in Elkhart, Indiana, for example, is quite unlikely to form a lobbying group with a Chicago company exporting steel.

4. *Legislators prefer concealed trade barriers.* When offering protectionist favors to interest groups, politicians naturally try to obscure the costs to the general public and reveal the benefits to favored constituents. Stephen Magee calls this "optimal obfuscation." This explains why so-called "voluntary" export restraints (import quotas) are increasingly favored over tariffs in this modern, well-informed world. And it is why congressmen learn to attribute protectionist voting habits to all sorts of humane concerns rather than to the organized constituent groups who support their campaigns.

5. *The trade bureaucracy is part of an "iron triangle."* To help obscure the way congressmen sell favors to constituents, Congress empowers bureaucracies such as the International Trade Commission to grant "countervailing duties" and import quotas against low prices ("dumping") on an *ad hoc* basis, so as to help industries with the most political clout. Imposing tariffs and import quotas by bureaucratic whim obscures the politicians' responsibility for the resulting high prices.

The concentrated interests then support incumbent politicians who can best assist them in dealing with the powerful bureaucracy. Because bureaucrats want the politicians to increase their budgets and authority, they are inclined to help congressmen placate their most vocal or most generous constituents. The trade bureaucracy develops a vested interest in arguments for trade barriers, because such agencies would be powerless and useless under free trade.

6. *Rent-seeking is costly.* Because the outcome of efforts to obtain protectionist favors is uncertain and subject to change, the costs can actually exceed the immediate benefits to the lobbying firms and industry groups. Moreover, the proliferation of economic favors of this sort requires companies to engage in costly efforts to protect themselves from the lobbying efforts of other companies.

Import quotas and tariffs on steel, for example, raise production costs for industries that use steel to produce appliances and autos, thus shrinking profit margins and making autos and appliances less competitive internationally. Import quotas and tariffs on fabric likewise raise the production costs of clothing, draperies, and furniture. Import quotas and tariffs on lumber raise the production costs of furniture and housing. In all of these cases and many more, the protected industry gains at the expense of other industries, which are thereby forced to protect themselves by making campaign contributions, setting up Washington offices, and hiring lobbyists.

The high costs of protecting one's industry from measures that protect others are one reason why comprehensive free-trade agreements make considerable political sense. Such agreements make it possible for industries to sign a truce in this game of mutual plunder. The auto industry may agree to forgo some barriers to imports if the steel industry does the same, because the resulting lower steel costs will help offset any added competitive pressure on auto prices.

7. *Bootleggers and Baptists can sometimes get together.* Public-choice theorists tell an apocryphal tale in which bootleggers and Baptists form a coalition to argue for banning liquor sales on Sundays. The Baptists want to mandate good behavior; the bootleggers want to eliminate competition from legal liquor stores.

There are a lot of "bootleggers" behind the opposition to NAFTA, busily recruiting gullible "Baptists." A *Newsweek* article, "Don't Look for the Union Label: It's Camouflaged" (May 18, 1992), points out that some "studies" on NAFTA are from organizations that receive much of their funding from the AFL-CIO, and that organized labor has "encouraged environmentalists and religious activists to lead the resistance" to NAFTA. While researching congressional voting patterns on this issue, I once thought I had uncovered a handful of "environmental" votes against NAFTA in the House, from representatives on the East and West Coasts. It turned out, however, that every one of these congressmen had a near-perfect voting score of 90 to 100 from the AFL-CIO's Committee on Public Education (COPE). Somebody is interested in cleaning up, all right, but not in the sense I naïvely imagined.

Like organized labor, protected industries can be quite clever about hiding self-interest behind a moral crusade. Tariffs are always said to protect jobs, not profits, even though many protected industries (such as textiles) routinely use their monopoly profits to buy labor-saving machinery and fire people. They then use the resulting job losses as an argument for continued tariffs and import quotas.

For example, a pair of Northern glassware manufacturers, already protected by a 38 per cent tariff, testified before the House Ways and Means Committee about the nasty environmental and housing conditions near the mostly U.S.-owned *maquiladoras* (plants in Mexico that assemble U.S. components into final products for re-export back to the United States). Like many other interest groups, the glassware executives had suddenly discovered that Mexico is poor. What these apologists for a 38 per cent U.S. tariff neglected to mention, however, is that Mexican glassware is not made in *maquiladoras* but by a huge Mexican company, Vitro, that owns plants in several U.S. states. The lesson in all this? It is almost always prudent to ignore any seemingly righteous rationale for gouging American consumers; instead, look at where the money is coming from.

—Alan Reynolds

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after [we] foist our environmental laws on Mexico, it is made to 'effectively enforce' them, what will happen to its already impoverished people?"

Fighting Principles with Loopholes

IN SUPPORT of NAFTA, then, one can say that the language of the agreements is probably not as strong as Kantor and Baucus would have us believe, but neither is it entirely toothless. What is distressing is that the supporters of free trade are already in a defensive posture: fighting principles with loopholes. Phrases like "high levels of environmental protection" are plainly in the agreement, and anyone who thinks that environmental activists will not run with them if NAFTA passes is naïve. Fred Smith is exaggerating only slightly, if at all, when he says that the environmental movement is "the most dangerous threat to economic liberty in the world today." We should think hard before setting it up with more power in the form of an "independent" supranational commission.

There are other free-trade arguments against NAFTA. As the agreement will preserve each country's existing tariffs against countries outside North America, imports would naturally seek entry through the country with the lowest external barrier, then to enjoy free passage throughout tariff-free North America. If, for example, Mexico has low tariffs on Japanese auto parts, and we have higher ones, auto parts will come in through Mexico, and then be free to cross North American borders tariff-free. To defeat this, NAFTA sets up complex "rules of origin," specifying whether goods will qualify for such tariff-free movement or not. By one calculation, if the cost of "non-originating" parts accounts for more than 40 per cent of the selling price, then the completed good will not qualify for tariff relief. These rules will divert natural trade flows, and in some cases result in more stringent rules and higher tariffs than already exist as a result of the 1989 U.S.–Canada free-trade agreement.

In response, it is said that the existing trade barriers scheduled for reduction under NAFTA are not high enough to divert much trade anyway. If that is the case, asks the economist Jagdish Bhagwati, the author of *The World Trading System at Risk*, why is it so important that low barriers be lowered still further? Very little attention has been paid to this key point. U.S. trade with Mexico is already booming, so what's the problem, exactly? Our exports to Mexico have increased from $12 billion in 1986 to $41 billion in 1992. The most important reason for this boom is that Mexico has done much to deregulate its own economy. It is said that NAFTA is important because it will "lock in" these reforms; its defeat would be a terrible blow to Salinas's pride, and so on. But if Mexico wants to lock in its reforms, all it has to do is not go back on them! Specifically it can lower its own tariff barriers still further. If there are barriers to trade with Mexico, Mexico controls them and can lower them. Right now they are on average twice as high as our barriers to their goods.

This elementary point explains why the arguments of Ross Perot and the U.S. labor unions—that free trade threatens American jobs—are such nonsense. U.S. factories were set up in Mexico primarily as a way of circumventing Mexican tariffs; the reduction of these tariffs may well bring the jobs back. Here's an example from the *Wall Street Journal*:

"McIlhenny Co. set up a Tabasco factory in Mexico City in the 1950s because Mexico's high tariffs and stiff regulations blocked imports and made that the only way to sell there. But Mexico dismantled its import barriers during the past decade; so, McIlhenny shut down its Mexican operations in 1989, expanded in Avery Island, La., and started exporting to Mexico instead." If other Mexican tariffs are lowered, other companies will have a similar incentive to return. The Economic Strategy Institute, headed by Clyde Prestowitz, has belatedly recognized the point, but one can't help wondering what took them so long, as trade is something they have presumably had on their minds.

Mexico has taken steps to deregulate its economy not in response to anything the U.S. has done but out of sheer necessity, and this necessity will persist for some time yet. After a quarter-century of socialism, roughly from 1964 to 1988, the productive classes had been thoroughly expropriated, the banks nationalized, the wealth expatriated, the peasants driven off the land. American bankers had finally even learned that the State Department no longer favors sending gunboats to enforce the repayment of delinquent loans. Therefore, banks were reluctant to send good money after bad.

So the powers that be in Mexico were out of cash and had no choice but to permit new wealth to be created. The government is even in the process of doing away with its collectivized agriculture! The peasants will soon be allowed to buy and sell the land they have hitherto merely been permitted to occupy. When that happens—privatization will take another five years or so—it's safe to say that poor Mexicans will no longer have to cross the Rio Grande to find work.

One is bound to ask, then, whether there is much justification for NAFTA, beyond concern that Mexican officialdom will have their feelings hurt if it is rejected. Unfortunately, this cannot entirely be dismissed. If NAFTA goes down, Mexicans no doubt will construe the outcome as Yankee chauvinism, possibly tinged with racism. It would certainly be unfortunate, for us but even more so for the Mexicans, if in a fit of pique they then attempted to revert to autarkic policies of protected monopolies and national pride.

In trying to prevent this outcome, however, U.S. officials, Democratic and Republican, made the mistake of granting the environmental movement new powers. In so doing they have occasioned legitimate, non-protectionist questions about the wisdom of NAFTA. The Cato Institute forces may be right that "on balance" the agreement is desirable, but it is difficult to calculate that balance, and quite impossible to say which way the legal interpretation of complex documents will tip that balance in the years ahead. □

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South Africa's Devolution

SLOUCHING TO PRETORIA

Anyone who thought that ending apartheid and creating a just, multiracial society were synonymous has been rudely awakened. But there is still time to affect the outcome, for better or worse.

R. W. JOHNSON

DURBAN—Antonio Gramsci once wrote that periods of transition between historical epochs were marked by a plethora of "morbid symptoms." This thought swims in one's mind as one confronts daily life in today's South Africa. "For Sale" signs proliferate through the white suburbs, for many are leaving, including not a few who fought long and hard against apartheid. They are spurred on by a murder rate which is now ten times that of the U.S.; indeed, if statistics mean anything, this is now the most violent society on earth. African squatter shacks crowd ever more massively around the cities, threatening to inundate them with a tide of suffering humanity and all the things that mass poverty means—drugs, disease, and a brutalized readiness to resort to violence. Down on the beachfront where I often walk, a pavement artist was murdered by streetchildren last week. A black friend tells me how he made the mistake of stopping at a stop sign in a Johannesburg suburb a fortnight ago (the police there actually advise one not to stop at red lights after dusk). He was set on by three armed men, wanting his car. He escaped by pure luck when a bullet ricocheted off his car and hit one of his assailants in the face. He got away with a car riddled with bullet holes but laughed at the thought that he should report the event to the police—"Why create useless paperwork?"

What crowds in from every side is a pervasive demoralization. The public rhetoric of "the new South Africa"—of racial harmony and the building of a new nation—is skin deep, at best. At the elite level the government and the ANC are hammering out a constitution full of fine phrases and principles, the idea being to proceed to the first universal-suffrage elections to a constituent assembly on April 27, 1994; but both black and white confidence in this process evaporated some time ago. Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), in alliance with white conservatives and several other black "homeland" leaders, flatly opposes it, insisting on a strongly federal deal not susceptible to later revision by a constituent assembly. What their opposition has concretized for many people is that it may not, after all, be possible to work out a new constitutional order which commands sufficiently broad support to survive. That is, almost any deal imaginable may fail to accommodate interests which are substantial enough to cause major trouble, perhaps even civil war, if they are left out.

The immediate crunch with Buthelezi looks particularly ominous. The low-intensity civil war between his primarily Zulu followers and the ANC has already cost many thousands of lives and has destroyed any basis of trust between the two movements, so that only the most cast-iron of guarantees will satisfy Buthelezi now. These the ANC, which has all the usual African-nationalist presumptions of political monopolism, seems certain not to concede. The significance of Buthelezi's alliance with white conservatives is that if he is driven to desperate measures (such as the secession of Natal as a separate state) it is not clear that the police or the army (strongholds of the white Right) will intervene to stop him. At the very least, it seems certain that even if Buthelezi is willing to stay within the fold, an election campaign will see the already widespread violence and intimidation reach new peaks. Under these circumstances a truly free and fair election will not be possible, which means that the legitimacy of the ANC's victory—already a foregone conclusion—will not be beyond dispute.

Already Failed?

IT IS too soon to say that South Africa's transition to democracy will fail, but in practice many people have already assumed that it will. Or, to be more precise, those who have

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lived with a Communist, liberal, or, in my own case, social-democratic dream of post-apartheid South Africa have all, if we are honest, to admit that the future will not be much like the one we once fondly imagined. Publicly, at least, nobody displays any nostalgia for the bad old days of apartheid, any more than nostalgia for the Communist oligarchies of yore is much in evidence in the former Yugoslavia or USSR, but the problem is the same: the old oligarchy provided stability and authority of a sort at the cost of great repression; it is not clear that a new ruling group can be found which will be able to hold the society together at all, or to do so without even greater repression.

Moreover, the economic dimension is very different here. Communist rule failed in the end because it failed economically, and the presumption, at least, exists that the post-Communist regimes will ultimately sponsor successful capitalist growth. In South Africa, at least until the 1980s, the apartheid regime presided over dynamic capitalist growth; great doubt exists whether the ANC will be competent or even willing to do the same. The South African Communist Party (SACP), which enjoys a powerful position within the ANC, argued until 1988 that East Germany was the best model for South Africa—since when its model has merely shifted to Havana (although its magazine, *The African Communist*, shows a certain dogged loyalty to Erich Honecker). To that extent South Africa is in a time warp all its own.

The ANC's Learning Curve

THE PROBLEMS are greatly exacerbated by the fact that South Africa is suffering its fourth successive year of negative economic growth. The causes of this miserable performance are low prices for commodities (especially gold) and the turning off of the inward flows of foreign capital on which South Africa has always relied, a mix only compounded by the ANC's decision to maintain economic sanctions until it is on the threshold of power. Nelson Mandela is readying himself to launch an appeal to U.S. investors to come to his support—for the ANC seems to believe that it can command foreign investment with the same appeals to justice and solidarity with which it has long rallied the anti-apartheid movement. A sharp learning process on this score is doubtless in prospect, particularly since foreign investors are certain to notice that there has been a great deal of capital flight from South Africa. Local businessmen, thoroughly alarmed by the strongly redistributive thrust of ANC policy and the declared intention of the SACP and its trade-union allies of "making major advances toward socialism," have been stealthily shipping out funk money for some time, despite the battery of exchange controls which theoretically makes such behavior impossible.

"Any luck?"

Whitney Darrow, Jr.: © 1962, 1990, The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

The ANC, which has not yet learnt that it must read the markets and respond to them, is blissfully unaware of the economic damage done by many of its policy declarations and postures. In any case, it is far more concerned to stay in touch with the various constituencies within its own ranks than to worry about the economic situation it will soon inherit. Moreover, strong noises emanating from such circles indicate a preference for autarkic development and minimum involvement by "international capital," all of which is quite sufficient to keep foreign investors scared off. Meanwhile, Rome burns: unemployment is 46 per cent and mounting, and as unemployment mounts so do crime and violence, which in turn cause business confidence to fall yet further, which creates further unemployment and capital flight, which . . .

The transition to democracy here is thus dogged by many problems which the countries of the ex-Communist world do not face. The most severe is the educational heritage of Hendrik Verwoerd, prime minister from 1958 to 1966, who preached and practiced the doctrine that Africans required education only for subordinate roles. One bizarre result is that an older-generation ANC leader like Nelson Mandela is noticeably more literate and better spoken than the movement's younger generation, even though they grew up in a far richer and more industrialized country. The worrying dearth of well-educated blacks is compounded by the ANC's own encouragement of school rebellions since 1976: the country will, for years to come, pay a heavy price for the slogan of "Liberation now, education later." Black schools are, indeed, in a state of virtual collapse, and the universities too are in permanent crisis as they seek to educate semi-literate black students who have developed a dire ideology of egalitarian mediocrity. Slogans such as "Pass one, pass all"; the insistence that low marks merely betoken racism in the marker; and the recurrent riots over demands to postpone exams or over the exclusion of failed students all stem from this central cause. One result is that blacks who have come through the essentially missionary-plus-British education systems of Zambia, Zimbabwe, or Kenya routinely surpass South African blacks in job competitions—and the ending of apartheid has, to the indignation of many local blacks, begun a large-scale brain drain toward South Africa from the rest of the continent.

In a sense, this is nothing new: most countries in independent Africa started with a shortage of educated manpower. But South Africa is not Ghana or Zambia. It is a country of six-lane highways, jet aircraft, computer networks, and skyscraper skylines. The rapid Africanization of professional, executive, and adminis-

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trative posts through affirmative action could, in the absence of qualified manpower, have disastrous effects in such a sophisticated economy.

The same worries exist at the political level, for the administrative and executive talent available to the ANC is very thin—that the ANC does not have a newspaper of its own, for example, is generally put down to the fact that it lacks the talent to staff one. The ANC itself is a notoriously shambolic organization—phones and faxes go unanswered, speakers show up hours late for meetings, money goes missing on a steady basis, and none of its leaders has any experience of running anything at all. All of which will doom the Jacobin elite of the ANC to heavy reliance on civil servants, coalition partners, and international bureaucrats with whom it will be often fundamentally out of sympathy. Failure seems predestined.

No Joy for the Victors

THE TERRIBLE uncertainty leads to heightened fears not only among the ten million whites, Asians, and Coloreds but among many blacks as well. Strangely, for a country moving toward its "liberation election," the mood is anything but euphoric, even among the likely winners. The Left, after facing a lifetime of criticism for "unpatriotically" running South Africa down, is now trying to sound up-beat—but not quite managing it.

The saddest spectacle of all, though, is the liberal and radical whites who form the bulk of my friends. Many of them have fought the good fight for decades and simply have not much more fight left in them. Faced with the onward march of an ANC which shows only an ambivalent regard for human rights and makes no bones about its determination to control the culture, many of them just duck, or try desperately to see something positive in the fact that things aren't even worse. None of them seems to have any appetite for standing up against the ANC for the same liberal principles they so bravely upheld against the apartheid regime at the zenith of its power. It is by no means uncommon to meet liberal whites who are simultaneously supporting the ANC and planning to emigrate "before the balloon goes up."

Such attitudes are self-contradictory almost to the point of madness, and there is, indeed, a great deal of madness about. Whatever one may have read about "bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," I can report unhesitatingly that it is no fun at all to live through a revolution like this. One is continually reminded of scenes from the French Revolution where strange radical *curés* momentarily held sway, preaching the worship of the Goddess of Reason or other such strange deities. Local equivalents of such radical *curés* are abundant in South Africa now, as are all manner of international snake-oil salesmen. At times, indeed, there is the feeling of a revolutionary circus, with notable attendance by black American celebrities (including Jesse Jackson, Andy Young, Angela Davis, Whoopi Goldberg, David Dinkins, and Riddick Bowe, with Michael Jackson expected soon), all come for their photo-opportunity with Mandela. Such visits produce much euphoric chat, clenched-fist gestures, and the like, and yet all the time the situation is getting worse. It's as if some star-studded pop concert were being staged on the ever-less-horizontal deck of the *Titanic*.

All of which is very serious, and not just for South Africa. Extravagant hopes exist that a post-apartheid South Africa will provide the political and economic might to revitalize the dying continent of Africa. Should

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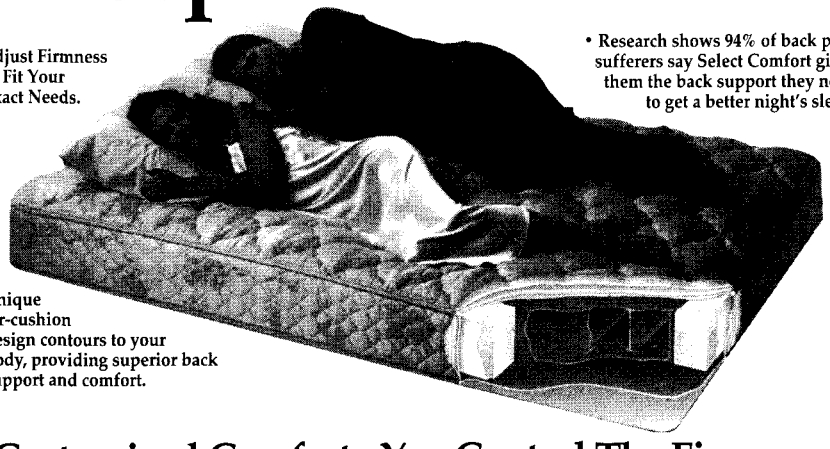

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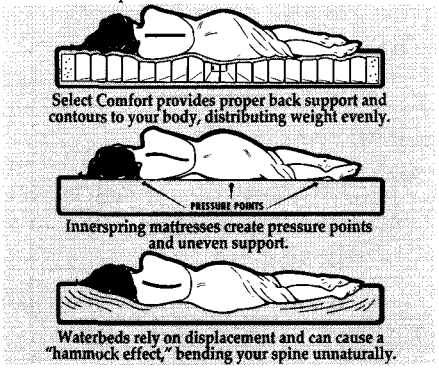
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South Africa's transition to democracy fail, with a consequent political and economic implosion, the knock-on effects on the rest of Africa would be disastrous. Secondly, the day when Mandela is at last inaugurated as President will be greeted round the world as the end of the anti-colonialist struggle. Mandela's triumph will have enormous symbolic value for people of color the world over. If it then becomes clear that this triumphant vindication is doomed to founder, there will be a large political price to pay outside, as well as within, South Africa.

Now, the Election

WE CURRENTLY stand on the verge of an election campaign which threatens to be both violent and one-sided. The ANC has already acquired significant influence over the state broadcasting system, is backed by a tidal wave of foreign money, by the churches, by visiting celebrities of every kind, and, it must be added, by a great deal of intimidation in the townships. Even without these factors the movement commands 45 to 55 per cent support, but the danger clearly exists that an ANC juggernaut will develop such that its opponents are simply rolled over. Already whites are leaving, and polls show that Buthelezi's black supporters, by far the most intimidated group in the electorate, are planning to abstain in droves. In such circumstances an ANC landslide of 65 to 70 per cent becomes a serious possibility, an outcome which would not merely strengthen the anyway strong single-party tendencies within the ANC, but also mean that major alternative interests would simply go by default—a certain recipe for civil strife. It is even possible that the country could break up into separate states, with large-scale population movements rearranging its ethnic map. It would be far healthier both for democracy and for the direction of future policy if the ANC were constrained by a strong opposition, no matter what political coloration that opposition might have.

Assuming civil war can be avoided, a great deal of responsibility will devolve upon the IMF, the World Bank, and other international lenders to restrain the ANC from embarking on some of its wackier economic schemes and from the temptations of political authoritarianism. President Clinton, no doubt with the Black Caucus at his back, will be strongly enjoined to give unconditional American support to a Mandela government. No matter how laudable the motives behind such a policy might be, it would in fact be more helpful if such support were to be both careful and conditional. For the ANC is evolving slowly from a liberation movement with strong Marxist–Leninist leanings into a more humdrum nationalist coalition, an evolution which, at all costs, needs to be encouraged. It is of great help in this respect that throughout its history the ANC has relied on the support of a liberal international gallery, to whose pressures and criticism it remains keenly responsive. Those Americans who see the ANC's cause as merely a replay, on a colossal scale, of their own civil-rights struggle are not merely making a large historical mistake but, in their enthusiasm for the "politically correct" side, are in danger of further loading the dice against a peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa. □

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AMITAI ETZIONI

THE GADGET is small: it can easily be incorporated into your next TV set. (Or, if you insist, attached to your old one.) By punching in a few numbers, you can ensure that your child will never see another violent show on your home TV set. The issue at hand, however, is far from small. Nothing less is at stake than the question of whether a community may edit its culture, or whether it must be subject to limitless gore and filth so as not to curb anyone's right to express himself and make money.

Until recently there was less than a broad consensus that television violence is a problem in need of treatment. On the contrary, while conservatives railed against pornography (sometimes in an uneasy alliance with feminists), liberals insisted that we have no business regulating show business. While these liberals did bemoan the spread of violence in the culture, they had neither the ideas nor the stomach to do anything about it.

Moreover, the social sciences, which act as a kind of semi-independent source of facts and observations, offered no further illumination. I hate to admit it, but over a lifetime of teaching sociology, I too tended to follow the dictates of the social sciences. Violence in the media was harmless, went the textbook mantra; there was no evidence of any "correlation" between exposure to violence (or, for that matter, hard-core porn) and anti-social behavior. On the contrary, social scientists used to opine, expressing violent urges when watching, say, *Fatal Attraction*, *The Last Action Hero*, or *Lethal Weapon* may vent these feelings in a harmless manner and obviate the need to act them out.

True, there were some incidents that contradicted the social sciences. *Friday the 13th*, a slasher movie, quickly found a live imitator. A movie about violence in the ghetto, *Colors*, led viewers to riot in several cities. A group of black teenagers, incensed over the violence depicted in *Mississippi Burning*, beat a white 14-year-old into unconsciousness.

Some media moguls, such as Disney's Michael Eisner, still suggest that movies like *Terminator* release more aggression than they build up. However, by now the social sciences have caught up. There is mounting evidence that violence in the media is one factor that breeds real violence in the body of society.

—A rural Canadian town began receiving TV signals for the first time in 1973, and the rate of violent behavior among young children increased 160 per cent in the following two years. University of British Columbia researchers found that the rate of aggression rose among both boys and girls and was widespread. Two similar towns nearby had had TV for some time and experienced no such increase between 1973 and 1975.

—A University of Illinois at Chicago study found that the amount of television a child watches at age eight predicts the severity of violent acts later committed as an adult. Even after controlling for factors such as intelligence, socioeconomic status, and baseline aggressiveness, the study found that individuals who watched more television as children were more likely to become abusive adults. This statistic becomes particularly alarming when one considers that about half of children six and older have their own TV set in their bedroom.

—A study commissioned by CBS in 1978 found that children who had watched an above-average amount of violence on television before adolescence were, as teenagers, committing acts such as assault, rape, major vandalism, and abuse of animals at a rate 49 per cent higher than those who had experienced little TV violence.

—A Harvard psychologist, Ronald G. Slaby, pointed out that the impact goes beyond increasing aggression. Children also experience a victim effect (increased fearfulness) and a bystander effect (increased callousness and desensitization to violence).

—After the anti–Vietnam War movie *The Deer Hunter* was first shown on national television, with the Russian-roulette scene left intact, some 29 copycat incidents were reported, 26 of which were fatal.

As the body of evidence accumulated and public concern mounted, Congress moved to conduct hearings on the subject. Predictably, media moguls protested that TV should not be blamed for having caused all that violence. Warren Littlefield, president of NBC Entertainment, argued that children are affected by poverty, broken homes, and communities awash with drugs and handguns.

Fair enough. However, even television producers and broadcasters had a hard time denying that media violence is one of the key ingredients in the complex mix of factors that produce anti-social conduct.

Freedom to Self-Destruct

IF IT WAS not easy to reach a consensus that there is a problem, it is even more challenging to find an antidote. In part the issue is philosophical. There is a strong sense, at least in the sizable parts of the community influenced by libertarians, that as people must live with the consequences of their acts, they should be free to choose their own poison if they so desire. Thus, if they wish to numb their minds by watching re-runs of *HeeHaw*, it is *their* minds that are deactivated. If they are too busy watching boxing matches on HBO to taste the joys of reading a fine novel, it is *their* lives that are diminished. This argument has less validity when it comes to footage that fosters violent

Mr. Etzioni is the author of the recently published The Spirit of Community *and the editor of the quarterly* The Responsive Community: Rights and Responsibilities.

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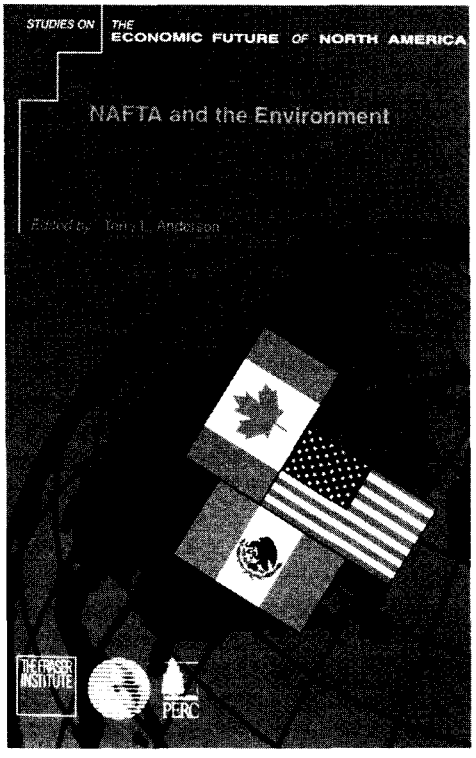
Some Myths and Facts about NAFTA and the Environment



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FACT: Mexico is the ONLY country that has shut down an oil refinery for environmental reasons alone.

MYTH: Pollution along the border will worsen.
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predispositions, the consequences of which others must bear. However, very few see the nexus between watching violent television and acting out as sufficiently binding to justify anything even remotely resembling censorship. (After all, the correlation between possessing handguns and violence is much stronger, and guns are not banned.)

The philosophical context changes fundamentally, though, when we turn to minors. Their hearts and minds and willpower are still inchoate. It is an elementary fact that infants are born without any moral or social values. Unless they are provided with the values that the community cherishes, they will grow up to be morally defective adults, if not full-blown psychopaths. After they gain values and maturity, youngsters may change their course, even rebel against the community consensus. First, however, they must learn what that consensus is. Learning that violence is not the way to dispose of one's problems is an integral part of the lessons that any civil society must pass on from generation to generation.

Remembering that the community agents in charge of the moral initiation of the young are clearly their parents brings us to the crux of the matter: how to enable them to discharge this duty when it comes to watching television. I stress "enable" because it will not do to preach to parents if the tools they require are not available. Parents cannot shape what values television instills in their children if information about what a TV program contains is not available, or if they have no effective means to enforce their decisions. As a father of five wonderful but not completely perfect sons, let me tell you that standing next to the TV set 24 hours a day is not quite the way to go.

V-Rated Movies?

IT IS a rather special American tradition, unlike the Scandinavian one, that we assist parents in guiding their children when it comes to mild and full-blown porn, but not when it comes to violence. Thus, there are R and X ratings for movies, but so far no V ratings. The only things that we cover in brown paper wrappers and sell behind drawn shades are depictions of explicit sex —not decapitation, evisceration, or murder.

"This is disgusting, foul, nasty, sordid, odious, repulsive, revolting, abhorrent, abominable, ghastly, loathsome, filthy—we ought to make millions."

In 1993, a few members of Congress decided to prod producers and broadcasters to do to media violence a bit of what they have done to porn. The congressmen knew that they could not pass laws that would survive the media lobby. However, they hoped that hearings on the subject would encourage the media industry, ever publicity conscious, into action. They overestimated what mere prodding can accomplish.

The hearings focused on two bills that had no more chance of being enacted than late-night TV has of being turned over to the University without Walls. One bill, introduced by Representative Edward J. Markey (D., Mass.), proposed that TV shows be rated like movies, and that TV sets be equipped with locks. The other bill, proposed by Senator Byron L. Dorgan (D., N.D.), would have the Federal Communications Commission keep a "violence report card" listing the number of violent acts on television each quarter—which seems to me to introduce a government agency where it is best left out.

The media, in any case, can be a mulish beast. Only Sega of America, a Japanese-based manufacturer of video games, voluntarily offered to rank its products. The rest of the media moguls responded by agreeing to introduce a generic warning—"Due to some violent content, parental discretion advised"—for a trial period of two years. Translation: until the publicity dies down.

For such a warning to be effective, moreover, parents must be present when the program starts. When the parents are absent, they are left with no tool to control their children's TV viewing. Such ratings alone, then, are in reality no more practical than standing guard around the clock. Indeed, warnings could have the opposite of the intended effect: according to Terry Rakolta, founder of Americans for Responsible Television, the warnings may actually attract children to forbidden footage.

Hence the need for a TV lock—actually a chip that reads signals sent over the airwaves. The technology is similar to that now used to transmit closed-caption information to deaf viewers: an unused portion of TV signals can be adapted to tell the chip what is forthcoming. Some critics argue that technically deficient parents will not be able to use a TV lock any more than they are able to set their VCR, and may well have to resort to having their children program the locks! However, this is hardly a serious obstacle. The chips can be made to be as user-friendly as the new VCR-plus. The parent simply punches a number into the lock, setting it at a given violence rating, then protects it from tampering through a simple childproof code, and the chip does the rest.

Others argue that it is difficult to define what constitutes violence; that some shows with a higher body count are less violent than those that fea-

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ON BOOKS AND BUCKLEY

- ***The New York Times Book Review*** (on *Atlantic High*): "Mr. Buckley is great fun to be with. Endlessly entertaining, gabby, opinionated, witty, sentimental, amusing, warm, and knowledgeable."
- **Norman Mailer**: "No other actor on earth can project simultaneous hints that he is in the act of playing Commodore of the Yacht Club, Joseph Goebbels, Robert Mitchum, Maverick, Savanarola, the nice prep school kid next door, and the snows of yesteryear."
- **Ronald Reagan**: "When Bill Buckley slows down, it is to a speed that leaves others in the dust..."
- **Charlton Heston**: "He's run a magazine and for mayor, written novels and commentary, played the harpsichord and Moses to modern conservatism, while keeping a proper perspective between God and country, friends and family."
- **George McGovern** (on *Racing Through Paradise*): "A delight...for me, the best of his writings. How can he be so clear and compelling on sailing and so confused on politics?"
- ***Chicago Sun Times***: "A first-class writer who brings class to the genre."
- ***St. Louis Post-Dispatch***: "As always, Buckley's erudition and humor shine through."
- ***San Diego Union***: "Subtleties and acuteness of observation and authority and wit."
- ***Chicago Tribune*** (on *Stained Glass*): "Intelligent, urbane, and witty."
- **John Kenneth Galbraith**: "Mr. Buckley should give up politics and concentrate on writing."
- ***The New York Times***: "There's a lightness of touch and a facileness of invention that suggests that even if he is dead serious...he is having nothing but fun in putting his ingredients together."
- **Murry Kempton**: "Buckley tempts you to remember Macaulay's grudging compliment to Burke, which was that he generally chose his side like a fanatic and defended it like a philosopher."
- **Publishers Weekly** (on *Right Reason*): "Buckley is at his brilliant, biting best in this latest collection of his political pieces from *National Review* and elsewhere..."
- ***Washington Times***: "Mr. Buckley's thrice-weekly columns...are marvels of a mind at work."
- ***The Christian Science Monitor***: "There are many beautiful pieces... whose characteristic tone derives from the ancient quality of pietas, love for country and family and God. His daily attention to the minutiae of the republic needs no documentation, nor does his religious integrity..."

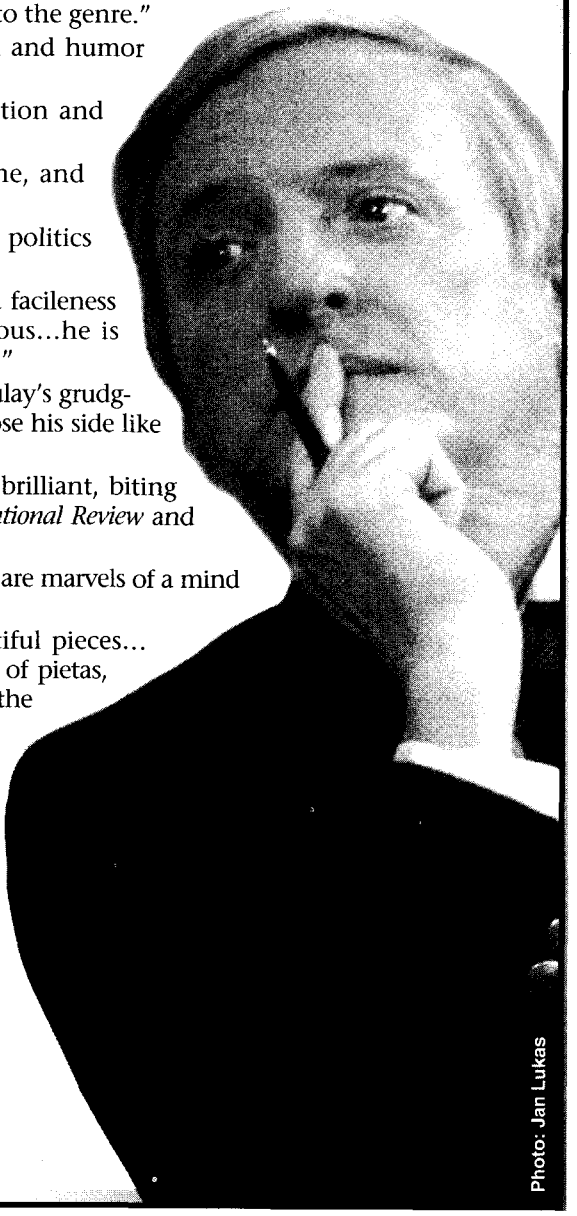

Photo: Jan Lukas

Read

Happy Days Were Here Again

the newest book from

William F. Buckley, Jr.

RANDOM HOUSE

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ture close-ups of gore—and from there the considerations multiply. Howard Stringer, president of CBS broadcasting group, points to *Julius Caesar* as a film that would fall victim to a V rating, and fears that a violence warning would end the presentation of all drama on TV. Some psychologists warn that *Jurassic Park* may be too "intense" for children; after all, the dinosaurs *eat* people. A *Washington Post* writer was worried about the fate of *Dracula*. Yet the networks already have in-house reviewers who disallow certain scenes; these reviewers could serve on a new industry-wide rating committee.

The Devil Knows Where

THEN THERE is the predictable slippery-slope argument. Lucie Salhany, chairman of Fox Broadcasting, warns that if we have a V chip, all sorts of censorship will follow: "Will we have the sex chip? And what about the news chip?" If you accept this notion, then we never can change the status quo, however perverted, out of fear that the suggested changes may lead us the Devil knows where. However, the fears of censorship are highly exaggerated. Containing our torrential floods of TV violence with a few optional devices is no more likely to stem our freedom of expression than sandbags can dam the Mississippi.

Last but not least, media representatives maintain that they only show what the public wants to see. Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, puts it like this: "There is one thing movie people worship. It is not ideology, it is not Democratic, it is not Republican. Hollywood worships audiences." If nobody wanted to watch violent movies and tapes, they would self-destruct.

Yet the truth is that the media respond not only to numbers on the bottom line but also to changes in community values—when these are in line with the liberal proclivities of major segments of the media. Thus if you watch a random set of programs you will find black neurosurgeons, judges, and police chiefs in a much higher proportion than their actual presence in the population. In other words, these representations are not demographically but politically correct. When President Reagan complained about the glorification of drug use in the movies, the industry first denied this was the case—and then mended its ways. Particularly revealing was a moot court organized by Fred Friendly in which several producers and broadcasters participated. All those consulted agreed that they would not produce or show a movie expressing the views of the KKK, whatever the demand. In short, when it suits the media industry, it is quite capable of editing itself.

All that we require now is to ensure that violence is added to the media's checklist of what must be toned down. The media may well find that there are more creative ways of depicting conflict than resorting to the mass butchery of stunt people. However, there is another consideration at work. The media may well refuse to budge on the issue of TV locks for fear that parents will set them to significantly curtail the amount of TV exposure of all kinds rather than just exposure to violence.

Here the public had best turn its message to the producers not of TV tapes, but of TV sets: give us the locks as an option at a reasonable cost. (While they currently cost $96 or more, if mass-produced they may sell for as little as $5 each.) Given a V-rating system and a TV lock, parents can do the rest. □

Separate and Not Equal

OUR GOLDEN ROAD TO ILLITERACY

In the name of helping the disadvantaged, are we consigning them to permanent illiteracy?

REGNA LEE WOOD

RECENTLY many Americans were stunned by test scores appearing in a $14-million National Adult Literacy Survey. Though most of the 180 million adults in this survey have attended school for 12 years, over 96 per cent (174 million) can't read, write, and figure well enough to go to college; two-thirds (120 million) do not have the "literacy proficiency" to go to high school; and nearly a fourth (40 to 44 million) can't read. Some can sign their names. A few have learned to fill in the height, weight, age, and birthdate blanks on forms. But they can't really read.

In fact—as neither the Education Department professionals nor the media experts seem to have noticed—there is nothing new about this news. These scores are congruent with the scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress tests over the last twenty years. Indeed, they are almost the same as the percentages on Armed Forces Qualification Tests that appalled President Johnson during the Vietnam War. In 1964, 20 per cent of Selective Service registrants were making scores in the Army's lowest, non-inductible Category V. And another 20 per cent were making scores almost as low, in Category IV.

Stunned by the numbers of young men failing what he called the "mental" tests for the military, Johnson, a former teacher in a less than affluent part of the great state of Texas, asked his educational advisors for a remedy.

They were convinced that poverty was the cause of these academic failures (even though only 9 per cent of recruits in World War II—young men who had grown up during the Great Depression—had made scores in Category V, most of them because they had never been to school). So, to counteract

Mrs. Wood is writing a book on illiteracy in America.

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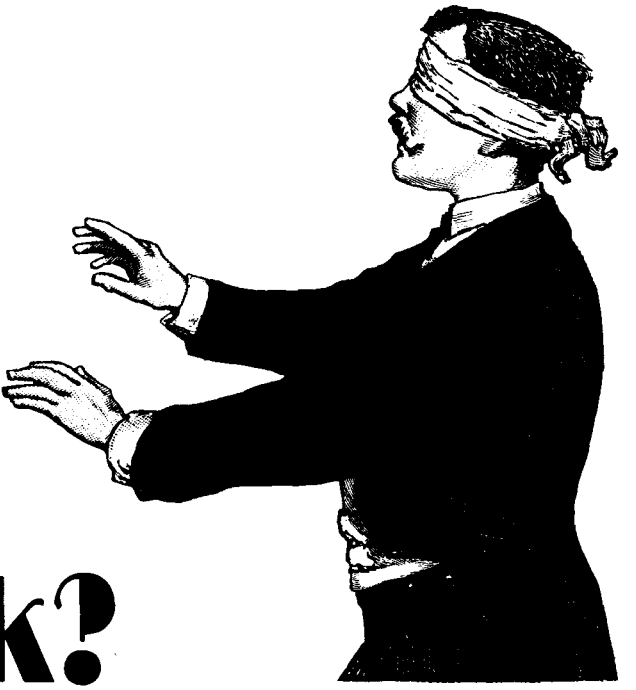
Why Are Catholics Walking In the Dark?



The Vatican thunders against abortion, tyrants, illicit sex, consumerism, dissenting theologians, disobedient priests and nuns, and more. But walk into your average parish. Where's the beef? We get crumbs — and platitudes. We don't hear much, if anything, about the Church's teachings on abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, pre-marital sex, pornography, the indissolubility of marriage — "too controversial." Birth control and Hell are taboo subjects. Pop psychology and feel-good theology are "in." Sin is "out," prompting one to wonder why Christ bothered to get crucified.

Cowardly clerics, fearful of being politically incorrect or challenging the flock or offending some stray soul, keep the full Catholic message from us. In effect we're blindfolded — left to stumble in the dark, prey to false prophets and the sirens of the world, not even knowing why we're Catholic.

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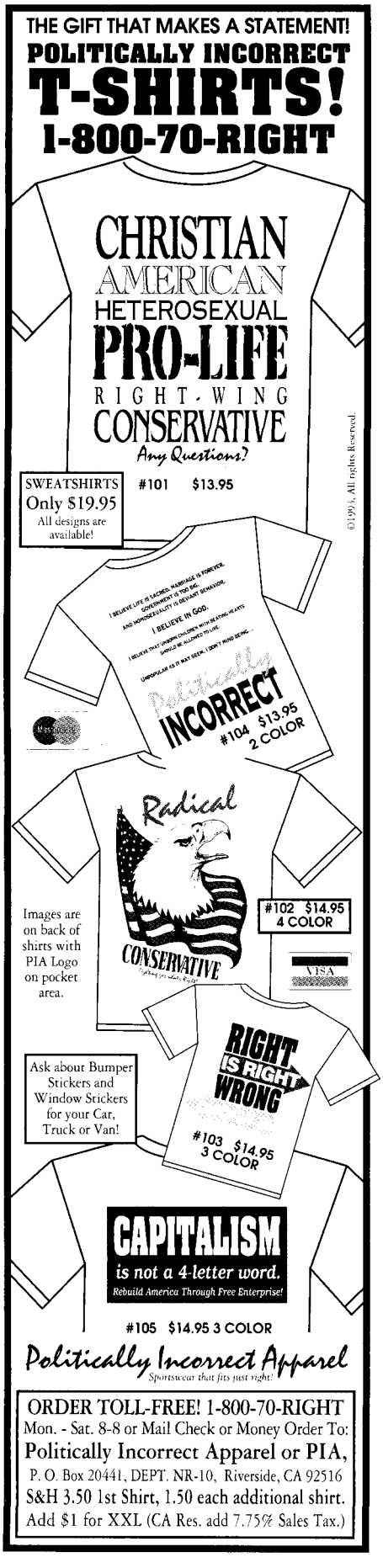

the damaging effects of poverty they came up with the Remedial Classes for the Disadvantaged proposal that became Chapter I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The plan, as described in the Act, is simple. Regular first- and second-grade teachers quickly identify children who need extra help. These are then put in special Chapter I classes (classes of only six to ten students), where instructors with graduate degrees in remedial reading, math, or language can give them intensive tutoring. The idea is for the children to stay in Chapter I classes for one or two years until they can keep up with peers in regular classes for the full school day.

In this manner, President Johnson's advisors thought, Chapter I teachers could rescue nearly all of the nation's disadvantaged children. There were perhaps two or three million then, most of them in the inner cities—certainly no more than 7 per cent of the total public-school enrollment.

Ten years later, with equally good intentions, Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Few thought the parents of children with impaired sight or hearing, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and so on should bear the additional burden of paying high tuition to private schools. Though the experts knew that teaching disabled students in public schools would be expensive—requiring very small classes and specially trained teachers with high-priced helpers such as psychologists and physical therapists—most Americans believed that using tax dollars to give these children the chance to reach their full potential was the fair thing to do.

Not According to Plan

NEITHER proponents nor opponents of public-school education for the handicapped expected highly trained Special Education instructors to teach any but truly disabled students. They would be surprised to learn that 4 million of the 5 million Special Education students in our schools today have no mental or physical disabilities. About 2.5 million of those are in the Learning Disabled category. By definition these are students with average or above-average intelligence who—for some reason—can't read. Nearly 1 million are in the Speech and Language Impaired group. These stutter, lisp, and have other difficulties in pronunciation that are not associated with the physical structure of lips, tongue, teeth, etc. About half a million are in the Emotionally Disturbed classification. Most of these are older students who have short attention spans—possibly because they have never learned to read.

In 1930, 3 million older Americans could not read because they had never been to school. In 1990, 40 million younger Americans—most with 9 to 12 years of schooling—could not make sense out of a printed page.

In 1930, 80 per cent of blacks over age 14 could read. In 1990, 56 per cent of blacks over age 14 could read.

This frightening increase in illiteracy may explain why the enrollment and the appropriations for both of these remedial programs have ballooned. Though the number of students in public schools has shrunk by several million since the crowded "baby boomer" years of the Sixties and Seventies, the enrollment in Chapter I has tripled (from 2 million to 6 million) and Special Education enrollment has climbed by 30 per cent (from 3.7 million to 5 million). Federal Chapter I appropriations have tripled (from $2 billion to $7 billion). And federal, state, and local taxes for Special Education have exploded (from $3 billion to $23 billion). Last year 11 million of the nation's 42 million public-school students were doing primary lessons outside of regular classrooms in one of these two programs.

A glance at 1989–90 expenditures for 570,000 Oklahoma public-school students shows how impoverishing these programs can be. Oklahoma's total education budget was $1.7 billion. Per-capita funding for regular students in a standard curriculum was $2,200; for 65,000 Chapter I pupils, $4,000; and for 63,000 Special Education students, over $7,000. Oklahoma spent 40 per cent of its total school budget on the 23 per cent enrolled in Chapter I and Special Education programs.

What did these students get for $680 million? No one knows. In truth, voters nationwide have no way to determine what they have bought with the $300 billion spent on these programs since 1965. No one has ever

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made an *academic* assessment of them. No one has asked—much less answered—the question: What do students learn in these programs that they cannot learn in regular classes?

A few studies of the Chapter I program have been made. But most of the collected data is socioeconomic information on low-income parents and neighborhoods, rather than academic records and job histories for former students.

Annual reports to Congress on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act show that almost seven out of ten Special Education students drop out, "age out" (reach their 22nd birthday), are expelled, or leave school with unearned diplomas. Perhaps one or two out of ten complete a standard high-school curriculum of any kind.

Contrary to notions that most Chapter I and Special Education pupils are in the early grades, rolls show that nearly half are in grades 6 through 12. Though overall school populations are 70 per cent white, 12 per cent black, and 13 per cent Hispanic, the combined enrollment in these programs is 58 per cent white, 25 per cent black, and 11 per cent Hispanic.

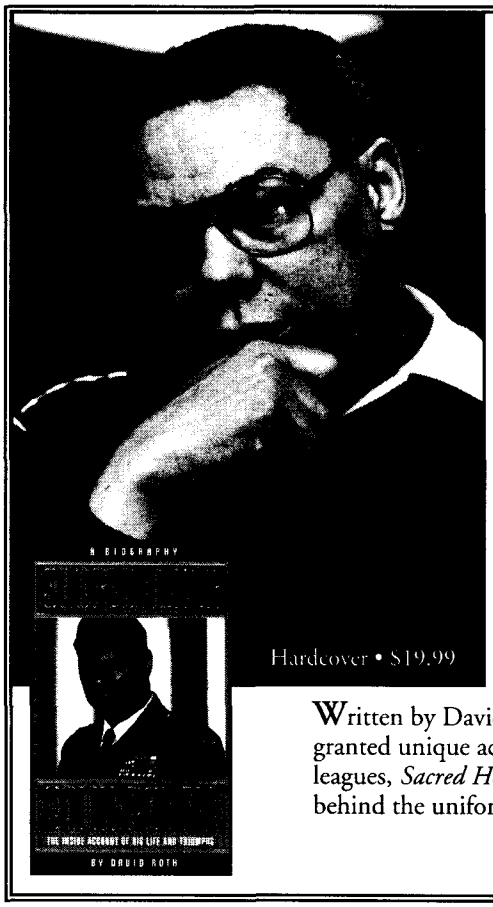
In the U.S., 26 per cent of public-school students are in special classes. In other countries, just 1 to 3 per cent are unable to learn in regular classes.

Understandably, many informed black parents fight to keep their children out of these classes. But, sadly, over half of the five million black public-school students are in one of these two dead-end programs.

The Only Solution

ACTUALLY, this failure rate should not be so surprising. For the only thing anyone can teach children who can't read is how to read. And neither Chapter I nor Special Education teachers—nor, indeed, America's regular primary teachers—have succeeded in teaching their students to read.

After the National Commission on Excellence in Education report and several other notable papers had appeared in the mid Eighties, Albert Shanker, long-time president of the American Federation of Teachers, made this discouraging observation: "Absent from all these reports . . . is the near universal experience that children who do not learn to read,



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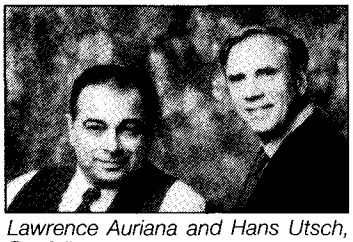

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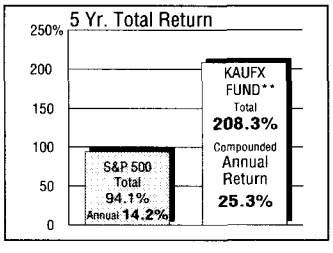

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write, and count fairly well by the time they are in the fourth and fifth grades, do not learn in school later, *no matter what kind of remediation we provide*."

Mr. Shanker is right. Since 1940, most of the 60 million schoolchildren who reached fourth grade illiterate have never learned to read.

These grim statistics show that 80 per cent of the Special Education students were born seventy years too late. For virtually all of the 4 million with normal intelligence and no limiting physical disabilities could and would have learned to read in regular first- and second-grade phonics classes in the Twenties and early Thirties. Proof is in the scores on 17 million academic military tests taken by World War II registrants who could read at today's fifth-grade level.

The major difference between America's straight-A private schools and her straight-F public schools is that most private schools never stopped teaching beginners to "sound each syllable," whereas most public schools started teaching—or trying to teach—children to "sight whole words" (see my *NR* article, "That's Right—They're Wrong," Sept. 14, 1992). That long-ago switch in reading methods is the primary reason for America's catastrophic educational predicament.

Here are some suggestions to end this forty-year academic nightmare: Cancel the Chapter I program. Drop Special Education courses for all but the truly handicapped. Use some of the saved billions to teach present and future first- and second-grade reading instructors how to teach intensive phonics. Use more of the saved billions for compensatory programs designed to help disadvantaged children *after they have learned to read*. The rest of the money can go back to the taxpayers or wherever Congress wants it to go. □

Sunk with the Titanic

THE LOST LUXURIES OF LADYHOOD

In order to put women in the boardrooms, was it really necessary to put them in the mire?

LINDA LICHTER

ON APRIL 15, 1993, a healthy young male entering a suburban Washington library slammed the door on a woman laden with books. In a world plagued by racism, poverty, and AIDS, it should be easy to ignore such a trifling incident. I might have done so on any other day, but this particular day was the 81st anniversary of the *Titanic*'s sinking, the last gasp of Victorian chivalry.

Only a third of the *Titanic*'s passengers survived; most were women and children. When a surviving ship's officer was later asked whether this "women and children first" policy was the captain's rule or the rule of the sea, he replied that it was the rule of nature. Official inquiries revealed that several male passengers refused to enter lifeboats because they couldn't be sure all the women aboard had been rescued. Among the few ungallant males who dashed for the lifeboats, one was beaten bloody by several men who stood stoically on deck, facing death but spared dishonor.

Such men understood the essential and intimate links between door holding, hat tipping, and making the ultimate sacrifice for the women every layer of their socialization had taught them to revere. Those chauvinistic fossils would be appalled to learn that the sex they drowned for is now routinely raped, verbally assaulted, and denied seats on trains even when obviously pregnant. They would ask how we could fight to put select women on the Supreme Court and in corporate towers while stripping all women of the freedom to walk our streets safely.

With a righteous twist of their handlebar mustaches, those *Titanic* gents would declare that women were the soul of this country's civilization before it was a country. When saints are toppled from their pedestals—or willingly leap off them—the social church is cold and empty.

Breaking Silence

I NEVER had the courage before to openly admire those men or envy the women they saved. At least a decade before the siege of political correctness, I was silenced by the unconscious but relentless intimidation of female friends and colleagues who are educated, self-sufficient, and eager consumers of the latest feminist books. I am supposed to owe the authors of those books unqualified gratitude for all the hard-won rights the *Titanic* women never enjoyed.

There *is* gratitude, but it is tempered, because the feminists who battled for my rights decided chivalry was tyranny dressed in pearl grey kid gloves. So they mocked, cursed, and lectured men who held their chairs until men stopped holding all our chairs in the name of equality—the one universal God we are allowed to worship.

Bucking the feminist party line, I expect to be accused of having low self-esteem or not thinking "freely." Bemoaning the losses of the past is for intellectual slugs who enter beauty pageants or join the Junior League—women who don't count, women who are excluded from the diverse politics of inclusion. It is also politically incorrect to notice that those who preach against sexual double standards often arbitrarily practice them. For example, many feminists believe women should be "protected" by laws against pornography, but no such protection should apply to military combat. And I wonder whether feminists would view PMS as a legitimate defense for violence if they knew that Victorian doctors attributed everything from

Mrs. Lichter is co-director of the Center for Media and Public Affairs.

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mood swings to insanity to the monthly "wound of love."

Revolt against Self-Restraint

BUT FEMINISTS deserve only partial blame for the erosion of chivalry and civility. Since the 1960s, an entire generation has gleefully obliterated every vestige of Victorian manners. The manners of a silk-hatted century were deemed too rigid, too snooty, too WASPy. But their worst crime was perpetuating and embodying that great Puritan bugaboo—self-restraint.

The post-bellum Victorians were stunned to learn that they were not one step below the angels but a few steps above primordial sludge. They gulped hard at that revelation, then tightened and expanded their comprehensive etiquette code to prove they could rise above their roots. They realized that a fragmented nation needs the common currency of common courtesy to peacefully settle its disputes as much as it needs a common language. In contrast, our generation has opted to replace that code with a cultural anarchy that encourages every individual to maximize his or her self-expression, whatever the cost. The same crusaders who want to battle social Darwinism with government assistance to the victims of various poverties, handicaps, and addictions also celebrate a free-for-all, in-your-face world that would have appalled their great-grandparents.

Meanwhile, they malign Victorian mores to unmask the repressive functions of courtesy and civility. A 1990 book by historian John Kasson typifies the current fashion:

> The ritual order of etiquette, by sternly guarding against slips in bodily and emotional control, assured the individual's deferential participation in the dominant social order. Instead of allowing any outward relaxation, bourgeois etiquette drove the tensions back within the individual self, providing ritual support for the psychological defense mechanisms of repression, displacement, and denial necessary to cope with the anxieties of the urban capitalist order.

Unlike Mr. Kasson, many uncredentialed people find more tension and anxiety in the uncivil social disorder that assaults them daily. They would welcome a little "unhealthy" restraint and repression if it spared them from

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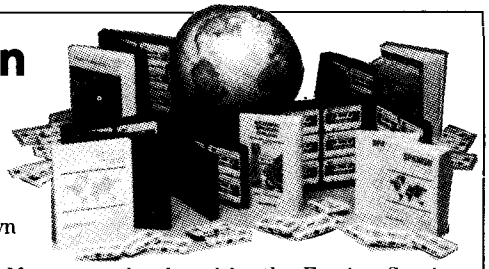

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"Absolutely Heavenly"

Nika Hazleton, ***NATIONAL REVIEW***, Jan 22, 1990
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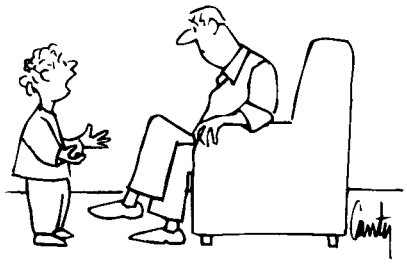
rib-bruising commutes to work, casual conversations laced with expletives, and street-corner hooting at women. (Once upon a time, a man who merely stared at a woman was considered a cad.) Most people living today never walked lower Broadway when custom confined louts who smoked in public to the east side of the street because the west side had the finer ladies' shops. They never saw women with parasols strolling fearlessly through parks, except in Impressionist paintings. And they never heard elderly people religiously called "ma'am" or "sir" except in the approved post-modern spirit of sarcasm.

Yet they know that in many ways life was better. They know because the collective historical consciousness of dead literature, dead art, and the memories of their parents and grandparents has let them vicariously experience the loss of what they never had. They feel these intangible losses as amputees feel their missing limbs, and to them they add concrete modern losses—how the sexual revolution destroyed the subtlety and poetry of romance, how the video camera destroyed personal privacy, how television destroyed childhood innocence. The Victorians also took their share of losses from the hydra-headed monster of technology, even before the world stopped waltzing and began spinning out of control. They complained that the telephone killed the art of letter writing, while the typewriter killed the art of penmanship. But unlike us, they still had a solid moral foundation and a rich tapestry of social graces to adorn the antiseptic walls of progress.

Deciding how to salvage pieces of the past is a difficult task made far more daunting by "right-thinking" academics, journalists, and other chieftains of the cultural elite. To admire the redeeming qualities of an age that practiced racism and sexism is to invite the very social ostracism that these progressive thinkers otherwise deplore as repressive mechanisms of social control. To avoid such scorn, historical adulation must be confined to primitive cultures or neglected and oppressed groups.

As a certified member of the latter, I wish women would reclaim their lost turf with the same fervor they apply to pursuing civil rights. In an era when we are told to go for it, we should feel free to ask for all the courtesies which were once taken for granted without fear of having that used against us. When men relearn respect for women and the self-restraint it implies, violence against women will decline, sexual-harassment laws won't be needed, and life will be a shade more pleasant. The lack of civility *is* sexual harassment, and it won't end until the concept of manhood is redefined.

I hesitate to suggest yet another reformation of men, since three decades of women's liberation have stretched them until they have no identity, just identity crises. But since live males are almost as reviled as dead ones, there is small risk in submitting to one more stretch. We might borrow the approach of astute and innovative African-American leaders who are trying to curb teenage pregnancies by teaching young black males that true masculinity means providing for children, not recklessly fathering them. To this antique notion, I would add another: that emotional and physical esteem for women is central, not tangential, to manhood. The British statesman Lord Chesterfield, a favorite source of Victorian etiquette writers, believed everyday deference was due to all women because it provided their only shield against men's superior physical strength. He added, "no provocation whatsoever can justify any man in not being civil to every woman; and the greatest man would justly be reckoned a brute if he were not civil to the meanest woman."



"It's not 'the birds and the bees' any more, Dad—it's 'safe sex.'"

Men used to be stigmatized as brutes and bounders for sins of both commission and omission against women. It was other men who put the punch in that stigma by socially ostracizing the offender and even refusing to do business with him. This unwritten penal code was much more effective than today's fuzzy hate-crime and hateful-speech laws.

Men need to revive such peer pressure, and women must prove they deserve men's regard. Too many still think liberation implies imitating men by cursing to the hilt, telling crude jokes, and proving they too can stuff dollar bills in the G-strings of gyrating strippers. At the very least, those women are begging to have doors slammed in their faces. (And I'm not blaming the victims, just the collaborators.) It is time for women to put one foot back on the pedestal while keeping the other planted in the executive suite. It can be done; a sex that can survive menstruation, childbirth, and menopause while still running carpools can do anything.

If there is a role model for this integrated woman, it may be Blanche Lambert, a freshman representative from Arkansas, who recently said, "When you grow up in the South as a woman, you're used to men doing very nice things for you, like opening doors and standing up when you come to the table. I'll be very frank with you. I don't want to lose that at all."

Time for a Restoration?

THOSE MIGHT be the most candid words spoken by a living politician. They may signal the resurrection of courtesies that men can enjoy along with women, as men always enjoyed proving their manhood in those pearl grey kid gloves. But there will be limits to this new old chivalry. Men are done dying for women; now women die because of men. This may be the inevitable price of sexual equality. It may be the result of a world that stopped reading Sir Walter Scott. No matter the cause, my female intuition tells me the *Titanic* was the end, and not only for the men who drowned.

I never experienced the depths of grief at the Vietnam Wall that I did at the Titanic Memorial, a Washington monument so anachronistic it is no longer listed in major guidebooks. If there is ever a memorial for another *Titanic*, it won't be erected to honor the men who perished to save women and children, because the only survivors will be healthy males who won the Darwinian dash for the lifeboats. When people visit that monument, they will sadly shake their heads and wonder—too late—where it all went wrong. □

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

September 22, 1993

Dear Rusty,

Boy, time flies. It was only two years ago that we were together down in Brazil, on the Rio Kuelene. There we were, hip-deep in swampy, fetid water collecting samples of Candiru larvae—actually, now that I think of it, I was the one hip-deep; you were on the bank with the harness line—and now look at us, only two short years later. I'm Vice President of the United States. And you're, well, you're still down in Brazil. But it's important work, Rusty.

I don't know what put me in such a reflective mood, Rust. I think it's because of where I am right now, looking out at the Joint Assembly of the House and Senate, while Bill gives his health-care speech. I've got to be careful, though. You can't hide much on TV, and I don't think it would look right if the American people caught me looking down at my lap, scratching out a letter to you on my new Apple Newton Personal Communicator. So every now and then I look up and nod, as if I've been following along. Tom Foley caught me sneaking in my new Newton, and so for the first few minutes, we played tic-tac-toe.

Hold on. Applause line.

I'm back. Actually, it's a pretty good speech. It's just that I've heard it about six times. Bill's been devoting a lot of time to rehearsing this one, and I've got to be totally honest, Rusty—it's a long one. It took most of last week to get it down from three and a half hours. Boy, was that a fight. Bill and HRC couldn't see how the speech could be any shorter than two hours. Mr. Gergen insisted that it couldn't be any longer than one. My suggestion was that they do the speech in two parts, like that play "Nicholas Nickleby." You know: part one, then dinner, then part two. Bill seemed to really like that idea. But Mr. G. wouldn't budge, and neither would HRC.

"If we cut this speech," she said, "then how do we explain the details to the American people?"

"Maybe it's better if we don't get too detailed," said Mr. G.

"Why?" asked HRC.

"Well," he answered, slowly, "the more detail we go into, the more obvious it becomes that we're leaving out one really big detail."

"And which one is that?" asked HRC again, miffed.

"How to pay for all this," Mr. G. said quietly.

"You know," said Bill after a thoughtful pause, "sometimes you can say more by saying less."

And so they compromised, which really gratified me. Because I'll tell you, Rusty, after seeing Yasir Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin shake hands last week on the South Lawn, it would be a shame if HRC and Mr. G. couldn't find some way to bury the hatchet.

Now, that was a day. The sun was shining. A breeze was blowing. A perfect day for a peace-treaty signing.

As I walked out of the White House to take my seat, I ran into Jim Baker, Bush's Secretary of State. I've always admired Jim Baker, Rusty. He always struck me as a guy with a lot of integrity.

"Mr. Vice President, it's good to see you," he said, shaking my hand.

"Nice to see you, too, Jim," I said. We stood there for a moment in the sunshine.

"Say," he said suddenly, "how's David Gergen working out? Everything okay?"

I nodded. "Well, listen. If you're ever dissatisfied, or maybe you're just looking for fresh blood—whatever . . . give me a call, okay?"

He tucked a business card into my suit jacket and hustled off. I was going to call him back, but Gerald Ford came up and slapped me on the back.

"Hello, Mr. President," I said.

He laughed. "Just call me Jerry. Everyone does." I laughed too. He peered at me for a moment. "And you are . . . ?" he asked.

"Oh, I'm Al Gore, Jerry."

"Albert Gore?"

"That's right."

"Albert Gore, the senator from Tennessee?"

"Well I used to be, yes."

"God. You look great. I mean, really, really great. For a man your age. Leaving the Senate did you a world of good, I can see."

"Well, sure," I answered.

"How's little Al?" he asked. "I hear he's got a new book, something about the environment?"

"He's got a whole bunch of books, Jerry. I think some are about the environment. A lot are about baseball players."

"Great. Great." He slapped me on the back again.

In a few minutes, the ceremony began. I took my seat next to Tipper. I've got to admit, Rusty, I was pretty choked up. The only thing that hurt the ceremony for me was Yitzhak Rabin, who kept fidgeting while Bill was talking, instead of standing motionless, and occasionally looking up to nod gravely. I should have coached him, Rusty. I've got it down cold. I could do it while writing a letter.

Whoops. Time to nod.

Gotta go, Al

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The Uses of Abuse

JAMES BOWMAN

IMAGINARY lives, considered as a social sub-class, have always had a much higher incidence of deviancy than you would expect to find in the population at large. This is readily understandable: if the problems of the Oedipus family were everyday occurrences, why would anybody bother to write a play about them? But Oedipus was an ordinary guy who made what Aristotle called a "tragic mistake" (*hamartia*): that is, the kind of mistake that other ordinary guys—we, for instance—might make. That is why his plight inspires in the audience, says Aristotle, pity and terror. King Lear, Hamlet, Macbeth, and Othello all experience episodes of madness, obsession, or delusion in the plays that bear their names, but none of them is a mad, obsessive, or delusional personality. Their essential normality is what makes an essentially normal audience sympathize with them.

Chris Miles

The therapy craze has changed all this. Now deviancy is taken to be the norm and everybody is a case history, or aspires to be. People carry, as if strapped to their backs, sacks full of traumas that they can take out and compare with those of their acquaintances. It is our equivalent of the eighteenth-century fad of carrying around snuff boxes. And so great is the craving for traumas and histories of abuse that literature has taken up the challenge of helping supply it. Ours is a more unhealthy habit than snuff-taking. For the thrill that we get from sniffing around child abuse, drunkenness, domestic violence, and so forth has an extra kick to it because so much of modern art and literature has taught us to see these things as the "reality" which all the amenities of life only serve to mask.

Of course this is no new thing. Around the turn of the century, Victorian respectability began to look to significant numbers of people like mere hypocrisy, like the "whited sepulchres" of Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*. That paradigm—of respectable appearances masking corrupt, horrible realities—could be said to date from Freud's identification of the id as "true psychic reality," but modern art and literature have done most to establish it. Picasso and Braque shattered the mirror of appearance, which was already begrimed by Impressionism, in favor of hidden and rather scary truth; Yeats lay down in "the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart," and Eliot praised the Jacobean playwright John Webster for seeing "the skull beneath the skin." Now this characteristic modernist vision has become generalized; "reality" puree has worked its way down the food chain of artistic life to become the staple diet of the bottom-feeders of popular history and fiction.

Consider, for example, the recent novel by Richard Bausch called simply *Violence* (Houghton Mifflin). This book pushes all the buttons. It is the story of a man who finds himself one of only two hostages among several taken in a convenience-store holdup to escape with his life. He is built up by television news reporters into a hero, though he insists that he has done nothing heroic. Meanwhile, he is slowly going to pieces, dropping out of college and allowing his marriage to break up. After watching several people die and then returning to climb into bed beside his sleeping wife, who knew nothing of the incident, it seemed to him that "the whole of life was freighted with pathological possibility." With this realization, suddenly memories are awakened in him of his father's beating him and his mother.

Bausch is selling us what he sees as the mental processes by which people attempt to conceal from themselves the horrors all around them and in their own past. "The violence was everywhere, and he should've known it," the hero realizes; "it was waiting to happen everywhere." So common indeed has this belief become among contemporary intellectuals that, for most audiences, it scarcely needs to be stated. T. M. McNally has managed to spin an entire novel, *Until Your Heart Stops* (Villard), out of two teenage suicides, one at either end of the book, which serve as tent poles supporting a vast, billowy big-top of horrors rounded up in the prosperous suburbs of Phoenix.

This novel, like so many others, insists on the potential for violence, physical and psychological, behind the most benign and innocuous appearances. A straight-arrow, Harvard-bound high-school wrestler breaks an opponent's arm deliberately and burglarizes a teacher's apartment; his sweet and partially blind girlfriend screams insults at her gay father; a good and much-liked teacher proves to have a drinking problem and smashes up the trailer of a pathetic stripper; another character poses nude for a girlie magazine. All of this is obscurely related to the suicides. Portentously (and pretentiously), McNally dedicates his book "To the living." It seems a fair deal all round: the living get the book, the dead get the glamor, and nobody gets the blame.

To be sure, there is lots of anguished speculation about

Mr. Bowman is American editor of the Times Literary Supplement.

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who gets the blame, because that is the necessary prelude to the usual answer: nobody; everybody. The point is that the more generalized violence becomes, the less responsible anyone becomes for it. McNally's overwriting is in the service of good old existential *Angst*, while Bausch has a more overtly political purpose: "This is America, boy. . . . I guess that's the American way. . . . The whole country loved murder." His troubled hero is touched when the one of the two killers who has survived writes to him from prison with an apology, no doubt under orders from his lawyer: "It all happened overtop of me." This proves to be the absolution the hero needs in order to try to put his own life back together. The violence that he fears inside himself is also overtop of him.

It's all somebody else's fault. Or America's fault. Or perhaps patriarchy's. The important thing is that "the living" who read novels and are frightened by violence should be assured that it is not *their* fault. They can blame social forces, some error in the way that our putative social engineers have designed the system that shapes us. This is why, I believe, it is becoming so common among historians as well as novelists to scrutinize the social institutions of the 1950s. The idea is to show us how, when you rip away the Ozzie-and-Harriet façade of that decade, you reveal beneath it an ugly scene of domestic mayhem that goes far toward explaining why the phrase "family values" inspires only derisive laughter among the elite.

Ozzie and Harriet, David and Ricky, were themselves, according to David Halbertsam's *The Fifties* (Villard), "a dysfunctional family" hiding behind the appearance of wholesomeness and thus a synecdoche for the entire decade. Stephanie Coontz, in *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (Basic), makes Halberstam's subtext explicit. She uses dubious statistics and laughable assumptions (for example, that federal involvement in building roads or dams or subsidizing home loans amounts to the same thing as welfare "handouts") to show that the hyper-respectable white middle classes of the Fifties were in fact a bunch of welfare queens.

Indeed, this debunking of the myths of the respectable Fifties is popping up everywhere. In a much-touted, Pulitzer-seeking story in the *New York Times*, about a ten-year-old in Chicago who lives in a broken home in a bad neighborhood where he has to dodge drug dealers' bullets, the writers find it necessary to point out that the child's "life is not the neat, suburban script of sitcom mythology with father, mother, two kids, and golden retriever." There they are again! Apparently that sinister if long out-of-date sitcom family reaches out from the TV graveyard to lay its dead hand on the life of the poor little child of the ghetto by hypocritically pretending that the world is not as he and the very sophisticated reporters of the *New York Times* know that it *really* is.

I do not, of course, mean to suggest that horrifying deeds do not happen behind closed suburban doors watched over by golden retrievers, but already we can see that the demand for such deeds is exceeding the supply. For it is not really the 1950s that the new façade-busters are interested in: it is the 1950s as a stand-in for traditional ideas, especially about sex. Tobias Wolff's *This Boy's Life*—recently made into a movie with Robert De Niro in the role of the sadistic stepfather, Dwight—gave us the boy's version of the Fifties and its cruel cult of macho manhood. Dwight may have been Wolff's stepfather's real name, but the allusion to good King Ike, the presiding patriarch of the period, is hardly without significance. In Richard Bausch's novel, the worse of the two bad guys is also named Dwight.

The female counterpart of Tobias Wolff is Charlotte Nekola, whose memoir, *Dream House* (Norton), gives us the Girl's Life version of the fascist Fifties. The villain—patriarchy—is the same, but the victims are different. These are the brilliant and talented women of Miss Nekola's family, who could all, no doubt, have been Nobel Prize winners and great humanitarians if they hadn't been cooking dinner for some man every night. "Nekola probes behind the happy façade of her 1950s family," says her publicity—as if that happy façade, or others like it, had not been probed behind so often already that it is now more obscure than the scandalous stuff behind it: that which the likes of Miss Nekola are forever dragging out in handfuls with delighted squeals of discovery.

What! Yet *another* Ozzie-and-Harriet family which is secretly dysfunctional? Why don't we get tired of it? One reason is that that story is as essential a mythic pattern for our time as Ozzie and Harriet themselves were for the Fifties. We cling to the myth of the family as a cover for psychic (or physical) violence in order to reconcile ourselves to the family's gradual degradation and destruction in the aftermath of the sexual revolution. In the same way we persuade ourselves that a high divorce rate is not so bad for children as a high incidence of unhappy marriages. That is what we want to believe, so both historians and novelists are pressed into service to help us believe it.

OF COURSE, this is not to say that domestic violence does not happen, or even that good fiction cannot be made of it. Elizabeth Berg's little novel, *Durable Goods* (Random House), is the story of a widower, an Army colonel, with two daughters whom he beats (as usual, because he himself was beaten—or worse—as a child), as told from the point of view of the younger daughter, a 12-year-old charmer called Katie. Once again, it is the Fifties or early Sixties, and the macho, patriarchal culture of the Army serves as the backdrop for furtive child abuse. But Katie's story is touching and funny and sad, because Mrs. Berg has wisely put authentic experience ahead of the mythic pattern.

Still, the fact remains that it does fit the mythic pattern. How can we know what to expect to find beneath the surfaces of ordinary family life if we do not have a literary culture to remind us again and again of what to expect there? And of course the literary culture knows what is expected of *it*. "A scathing indictment of the way things were 'back then'—i.e., now . . ." says *Publishers Weekly* of Lawrence Naumoff's novel, *Taller Women* (Harcourt, Brace)—not because it is in fact any kind of indictment, scathing or otherwise, but because the culture of contemporary fiction regards scathing indictments of the way things were "back then" as *ipso facto* good things. In the old days when people read for pleasure, a bookseller desperate to move a few volumes of Henry James might have called *Portrait of a Lady* a "rattling good yarn."

What *Taller Women* is really is this: an elaborate rationale for the sensitive man's mid-life crisis. Naumoff recognizes that when his hero, Monroe, exchanges wife number one, an intelligent but high-strung woman, for a virginal,

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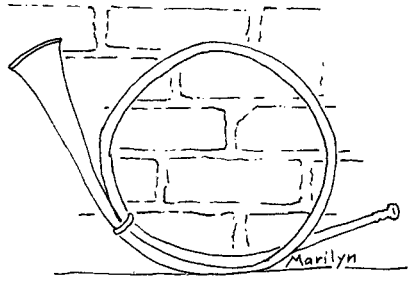
18-year-old would-be cowgirl, it is a retrograde step according to the canons of enlightened and feminist thought. This is potentially toxic material. So he has to filter it through layers of fantasy and whimsy, and ratiocination about the needs of the discarded wife. It helps, too, that the wife herself is kept entirely off stage until the final thirty pages, when she appears only in order to bestow her blessing on the hopeful romance of Monroe and his wild filly.

All this is done with so much sensitivity toward the condition of women that no less a figure than the feminist novelist Fay Weldon—who writes in a somewhat similar style, only from the woman's angle—calls it an example of "the New Male Fiction of Feeling." You would think that some of the feelings would be worrying to someone like Mrs. Weldon. The "taller women" of the title are those splendid Amazons of feminist mythology that a certain kind of man, perhaps back in the Seventies, once thought he admired.

> This woman warrior thing sounded like a good idea at first. It seemed it would be fun. The boys were excited, initially, and agreed to it. Later, it was not much fun. It appears now most of them wanted the woman as child. . . .

Certainly that's what Naumoff's hero wants. He goes off to the West with his woman-as-child, but somehow what would otherwise look like a cliché is meant to appear fresh and moving because of what the publicist calls a "disturbing foray into the dark side of relationships."



This is another "scathing indictment" type of formula which appeals to the whited-sepulchre model but is almost equally misleading. There are no "dark sides" of relationships: only Monroe's relationships, and abusive ones involving his friends: especially Lydia, who had an abusive father, and her friend Martha, who goes from an abusive husband to an abusive lover to the abusive lover's abusive friends, who hang her by her hair from a balcony

> like an ancient human sacrifice, a lesson that this is what awaited those who violated the beliefs of the people. These men had never studied anthropology. They wouldn't know an anthropologist from an archaeopteryx, but they repeated the punishment for sensuality, for desire, for wantonness from times past. These three men, like the priests or elders of old, knew they had to sacrifice this woman. . . . Wantonness in women would always be punished.

This is the sort of thing that a certain kind of mind finds very deep. With the same intellectual superciliousness, Naumoff goes on to tell of the punishment for non-conforming women among the Rwani tribe, or the Mogids of Central Asia. "Because of this, these particular men could not be blamed," he writes. "Maybe it was in their genes."

Maybe it was. Some feminists must actually like this kind of sophistry because it confirms their ideological preconceptions about men and keeps themselves secure as victims in perpetuity. It also must flatter them that it is a man who says it, who abases himself and his entire sex and his entire sex's genes before them. In the same way you might say to the wife, "I know I'm bad. I'm thoroughly rotten, the lowest of the low. I've behaved appallingly, despicably. How can you put up with a piece of human garbage like me?" And then of course she forgives you, and you've got away with it. Likewise, Monroe gets away with it. Within the structure of this novel, the only reason for poor Martha to hang by her hair from the balcony is so that Monroe can escape blame for dumping the grown-up woman in favor of the adoring cowgirl. It all happens overtop of him, you see.

Monroe also endears himself to the gals by being a mega-carer, an emergency-room physician, a fact that has its relevance in providing him with an excuse to know about cruelty and wife beating. Not, perhaps, altogether by coincidence, Gail Donohue Storey's dream man in her novel, *The Lord's Motel* (Persea), is also an emergency-room doc: a man who sees every day the underlying horror that is the *reality* of life, and yet manages to live more or less gracefully with it. But emergency-room doctors are still *doctors*, after all, and at its most basic this is a classic woman's romance about shedding Mr. Wrong and hooking up with Mr. Right. Does it surprise you that Mr. Wrong is a cruise-ship social director and Mr. Right is a doctor? But, like Lawrence Naumoff, Mrs. Storey throws into the standard fictional mix a history of abuse. The heroine's wacky adventures with her two suitors are intercut with flashbacks to her father's violence toward her mother.

What are these here for? For two reasons: first as a kind of emotional backdrop to the drama and guarantor of its seriousness. It reminds me of one of the cheapest of Hollywood's cheap tricks: that of telling an ordinary story against the backdrop of the Kennedy assassination in order to lend it a wholly factitious portentousness.

The second reason for the introduction of the theme of abuse into what is essentially a comedy of manners is to provide an explanation for the heroine's self-destructive behavior with Mr. Wrong. This is the therapeutic contribution to art: the conversion of characters into case histories—as if there were some kind of necessity for a person exposed to abusive behavior to behave in a particular way. As a first-time novelist Mrs. Storey has actually created quite an engaging character, whose behavior would be much more interesting if it had been freely chosen but whom she feels constrained to provide with a conventional "motivation." In this she is only doing what so many more experienced novelists these days do, which is to make an episode of abuse the *fons et origo* of the particular set of behaviors that interest them.

Take, for example, Kathryn Harrison's *Exposure* (Random House), which dwells upon the effects in later life of a girl's being photographed in erotic dishabille by her highly artistic father (she becomes a junkie and a shoplifter), or Bradley Denton's *Blackburn* (St. Martin's), about a boy who becomes disillusioned with the entire adult world because of his father's beating of himself and his mother (he becomes a serial killer). Again and again the same formula is repeated: real fictional characters are turned into psychological automata. The determinist subtext is another way of insisting on the generalization of violence and the diffusion of blame.

Paradoxically, the attempt to de-moralize violence *vis-à-*

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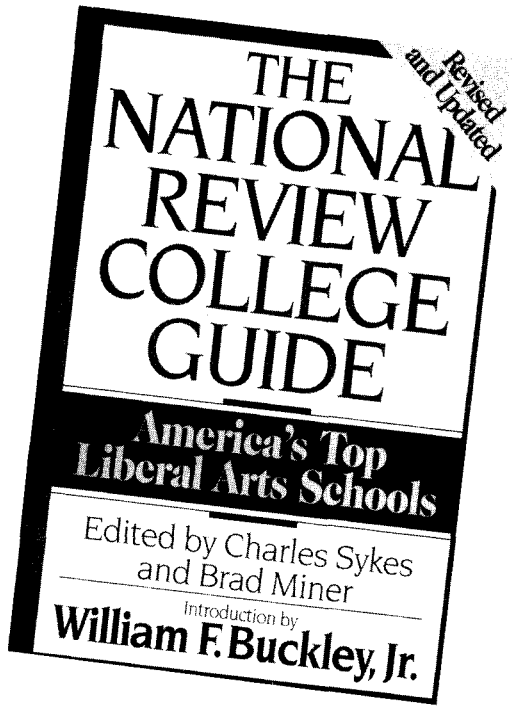

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vis its perpetrators and victims coincides with an emphasis on how reading about it is spiritually transforming and consciousness-raising. Fiction is being absorbed by the ever-growing self-help genre by which yuppies are forever getting in touch with their ever-diminishing selves. It is not enough any more, apparently, to thrill us with a rattling good yarn; you have to "explain the world," according to Kathryn Harrison. Can we really believe that there is a large reading public asking to have some novelist "explain the world" to it? No. Insofar as this stuff finds readers at all, it is directed at those who only want further reassurance that they are not responsible for any of the bad things in the world. They certainly cannot read it for its style. In most of this fiction, "good writing" means the etiolated stuff of the "creative writing" workshop, which no one but other "creative writers" voluntarily reads. The university style is simply the accepted medium for teaching the university's lesson on the subjects of sex and violence, those traditional provinces of fiction.

What is this lesson? First of all that the capacity for the most appalling sorts of violence is latent within each of us. The characters in these novels are "haunted by secret demons," as the blurb for *Until Your Heart Stops* puts it. Nor is this just a figure of speech. The demons are nothing to do with the poor devils haunted by them; they are just one of the exculpatory constructs that these books deal in. John L'Heureux introduces his novel, *The Shrine at Altamira* (Viking), the story of a man who burns his own son nearly to death out of jealousy of his wife's love for the boy, with an epigraph by Paul Fussell: ". . . if you can't imagine yourself an SS officer hustling the Jewish women and children to the gas chamber, you need to be more closely in touch with your buried self."

Do I really? And just how many fathoms deep must I go into my dug-up psyche before I find this monster? If moderate amounts of digging do not unearth him, by what article of faith am I required to believe in his existence? God knows who gave it to them, but both Fussell and L'Heureux seem to accept this tenet concerning human nature unquestioningly. Because some nut-case burns his kid, it follows that we all must be capable of the same deed.

> This will be terrible [L'Heureux forewarns us]; do not deceive yourself. We hear stories like this on television but we do not look, and when they turn up in newspapers, we glance away, because we know there are crazy people and people who are mad with love, but we refuse to know any more than that. We lead normal lives, careful lives, we are decent men and women.
>
> Still, these things happen.
>
> Still, people do such things.

Oooh! Scary, huh? He means *us*. He means *we*, or people like us, do such things. He asks us, in effect, to believe that his child-burning hero, like Oedipus, has merely made a tragic mistake. So, apparently, did the SS officers who are otherwise just like ourselves. But if that is true, what evil cannot be reduced to a mistake? What sin does not carry with it its own absolution?

Rubbish! We are not morally determined; sin is not reducible to sickness. The Nazi hustlers were rightly presumed responsible for their actions, which means that we may still presume ourselves responsible for not being Nazis. Or not burning our children. Even mystifiers of moral disorder like Fussell and L'Heureux must recognize this in practice, since neither, so far as anyone knows, has been irresistibly tempted to gas or burn anyone. The only thing they are guilty of is the pretense of belief in their own, hidden Satanic qualities as a way of advancing the agenda of one sort or another of leftism and its assault on patriarchy, on tradition, on families, on free will, and on individual responsibility. □

Unhand Us, Miss MacKinnon!

STEPHANIE GUTMANN

FOR several years now I have been struggling with the problem of how to write a book about the "crisis" of "date rape" on college campuses. It's a big quivering plum of a subject. You've got inherent salacious value—Coeds! Sex! You've got saleability. You've got incredible visuals: vivid, practically Boschean tableaux of youngsters chanting, "Cut it out or cut it off!" and of Take Back the Night marches under the moon with young women, like testifiers at the Salem witch trials, working themselves into a frenzy of self-pity and denunciation.

The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism on Campus, by Katie Roiphe (Little, Brown, 180 pp., $19.95)

Miss Gutmann wrote about the Violence Against Women Act for our August 23 issue.

And, though a book about date rape may sound sort of narrow (or too Sunday-supplement, too *Oprah!*), it must unfailingly lead the writer to another very rich subject: what the post-sexual-revolution, post-feminism, twenty-something generation is doing about sex. The twentysomethings are the first generation to spend their entire adulthood in the world blueprinted by feminism and the Sixties, and are thus interesting to observe as laboratory rats: What effect do co-ed dorms, safe-sex workshops, and condom-fitting drills really have on the young?

There are a lot of other big issues connected, actually. The hysteria over date rape is only a fissure in the ground marking bigger social shifts below. Among these are the mainstreaming of the most extreme feminist ideas (as seen in the new federal sexual-harassment legislation and pending legislation against pornography and violence against women); the rise of a particularly demagogic, particularly charismatic, particularly *effective* feminist leader, Catharine MacKinnon (who helped create the aforementioned legislation); and the rebuke of masculinity in general.

With a mixture of nausea, exhilaration, and awe I have to report that while I was sitting around dithering about possible chapter headings, a 25-year-old smarty-pants Harvard graduate named Katie Roiphe went ahead, wrote the-book-that-should-be-written-about-all-this-stuff, and did it breath-takingly well.

You'll excuse me if I end this review now and go back to bed.

The Morning After is a memoir only

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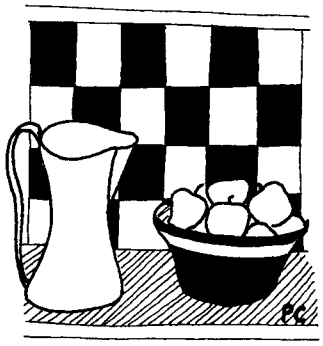
180 pages long. Written in an unpretentious first-person "Hers" column style, peppered with cultural references and poetic imagery, it is a fast, entertaining read. (Camille Paglia, Susan Faludi, Francis Ford Coppola's *Dracula*, and David Mamet's *Oleanna* make appearances, as do Shakespeare, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Chaucer, Auden, and Richardson's *Clarissa*.)

Some of it is about growing up as the daughter of a well-known and fairly devout feminist. Miss Roiphe, raised in a hermetic PC environment, is thus the perfect lab rat—but a more encouraging one. Her mother is Anne Roiphe, the novelist; her father is a well-known psychoanalyst; and both sets of genes shine in her writing.



She goes on to describe studying literature at Harvard during the height of its lit-crit, deconstructionist days. Since Miss Roiphe—now working on a PhD in English at Princeton—writes directly from the Belly of the Beast rather than from the safety of a think tank, her prose has more revealing and identifying "status detail," more imagery, more emotion than the books about campus PC that have gone before it. Because it's practically all primary sources (dining-hall conversations, posters, graffiti, student-newspaper editorials, leaflets, signs at marches), it evokes—in the manner of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Darkness at Noon*—the day-by-day texture of a strange, totalitarian world and *the way it feels* to be struggling to keep your head when everyone around you believes two plus two equals five or, as one of Miss Roiphe's classmates sternly informs her, that "Edith Wharton's characters are necessarily anti-feminist because within the hegemonic male discourse, it is impossible for the female voice to be empowered."

Okay. It isn't a revelation by now that the date-rape crisis isn't really about rape but is instead a sort of dishonest, public re-evaluation of sexual norms. Ever since the date-rape crisis became the darling of the newsweeklies there have been a core of writers chipping away at the lie that the incidence of rape is "skyrocketing" (or whatever Sunday-supplement adjective you prefer to use). People such as Neil Gilbert and Camille Paglia have managed to show, from various angles, how the "crisis" is held together by sinews of hysteria, ideology, and media credulity. Still, it's necessary to go through this first "proof"—to take apart the statistics and the studies, to look at the credentials of the movement's talking heads. Miss Roiphe goes through these paces well, concluding: "there hasn't been a remarkable change in the number of women being raped . . . just a change in how receptive the political climate is to those numbers."

Then she gets on to the more interesting question of what it means when one huge sector of people (students, professors, members of the "helping professions") decides to start identifying ordinary male sexual initiative as rape, and other huge sectors (college administrators, journalists, politicians) accept this vision of the world. As Miss Roiphe puts it: "somebody is finding this rape crisis and finding it for a reason. The next questions, then, are who is identifying this epidemic and why."

She comes up with some good answers. The word "rape" can be a political tool. For Naomi Wolf, a feminist writer in her twenties who has to contend with the waning interest in feminism among women her own age, the word, strewn through her writing whenever she feels she is losing her audience, is "a call to arms, a red flag, an undeniable sign that things are falling apart."

For other feminists, the concept of a "rape culture" in which we are all supposedly trapped can be "a political trump card," a way of "sequestering feminism in the teary province of trauma and crisis." "They can block analysis," Miss Roiphe says, "with statements like 'You can't possibly understand what I've been through.'" It's true: holding rape victims in front of them as cover, feminists have been accomplishing the most outrageous things.

Finally Miss Roiphe gets into the most dangerous uses of the word as promulgated by the Susan Brownmillers, the Catharine MacKinnons, the Andrea Parrots. Professor Parrot of

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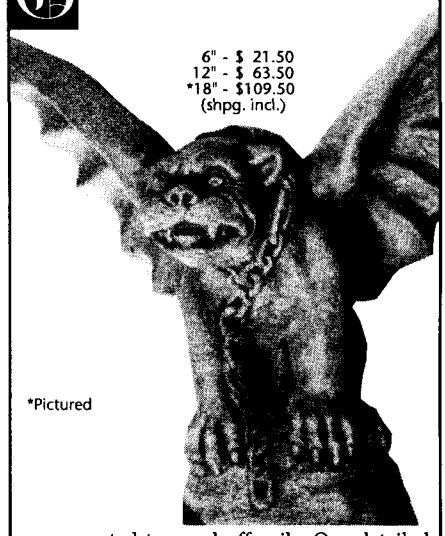

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Cornell, author of many surveys purporting to prove the ubiquitousness of rape, has written:

> Any sexual intercourse without mutual desire is a form of rape. Anyone who is psychologically or physically pressured into sexual contact is as much a victim of rape as the person who is attacked on the streets . . . sometimes women don't recognize sexual assaults as rape. Education is necessary to sensitize both men and women to what constitutes rape.

This, then, is the heart of it: that consent, as Catharine MacKinnon often says, is not really possible in a society where men are more powerful than women. Women's desire for men is an illusion; it's all a form of rape, of appeasing or bargaining with the oppressor. But this stuff isn't just staying put in college lecture halls (where one can always expect to find *some* looniness). It's leeching out into campus policy, workplace policy—and federal law. Obviously, it's important that we all be a little clearer about what we're talking about when we talk about rape. So hooray for Katie Roiphe! She has translated some of the code words, and brought some needed honesty to the discussion. □

Raw Deal

DAVID FRUM

WHEN candidate Bill Clinton promised to blast America back to prosperity with "public investment," he tapped into a deep vein of liberal sentimentality about the pharaonic federal projects of the New Deal. In less ideologically driven circles, however, the reputation of those projects has been sliding for some time: environmentalists now dislike the era's dams and highways, architects loathe its tower-in-a-field public housing, and economic historians pooh-pooh the projects' stimulative effect. Jordan Schwarz's new book pretends to be a history of the New Deal: in fact, it is a confused and confusing attempt to prove that Mr. Clinton and the New Deal sentimentalists are right, that America *can* pave its way to prosperity.

The New Dealers: Power Politics in the Age of Roosevelt, by Jordan A. Schwarz (Knopf, 411 pp., $27.50)

Mr. Schwarz has set out to show nothing less than that the New Deal amounted to a coherent project to revive a depressed American economy.

> The New Dealers . . . sought to create long-term markets by building an infrastructure in undeveloped regions of America. The New Dealers believed that national economic growth was stifled by the monopolization of capital and manufacturing in the Northeast quadrant of the country—making the South and West undeveloped countries. They concluded that relief and recovery were stopgap solutions to the problems of unemployment and stagnation; poverty required development through hitherto unimagined quantities of public investment that could inspire labor mobility and private investment. . . . Thus the New Deal's lasting contribution to America's postwar economic growth is a revolution in expanded credit supported by public capital.

That last sentence, at least, sounds right. But Mr. Schwarz's effort to prove his generalization is, unfortunately, a failure.

Schwarz has assembled a large jumble of facts about a collection of lower-echelon New Dealers, and he is determined to make use of them, whether they are new or not, whether they advance his argument or not. It sometimes seems that Schwarz regards historical facts as a sort of intellectual artillery: bombard the reader with enough of them, and you so weaken his defenses that even the most lightly armored thesis will be able to charge forward without resistance.

And Schwarz's thesis is indeed lightly armored. It's an interesting quirk of historiography that the New Deal's supporters tend to argue that it was an intellectually *incoherent* event. The left-wing historian Alan Brinkley approvingly cites the reply of Alvin Hansen—one of the most important New Deal economic policymakers—when asked in 1940 whether the "basic principle" of the New Deal was sound: "I really do not know what the basic principle of the New Deal is." It has typically been the Roosevelt Administration's detractors—on the Right and the far Left—who have claimed to have identified an interior unity in its policies.

Schwarz is unusual among admirers of the New Deal in agreeing with the detractors. But he justifies his agreement only by leaving a lot out of his story. To him, the cartels of the National Recovery Act of 1933–34, the pro-union labor code of 1935, and the Social Security Act of 1935 are sideshows: the rebuilding of consumption power through public works in underdeveloped regions of the country is the main event. The core of the New Deal, as he sees it, was Jesse Jones's Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which lent money to regional banks to finance local business, bypassing the allegedly parsimonious metropolitan banks of New York. RFC led to the great public-works projects of the later New Deal: Bonneville Dam on the Washington–Oregon border, the stupendous Hoover Dam in Nevada, the Houston Ship Canal, and the vast Tennessee Valley Authority.

This is all true as far as it goes. But it does not go nearly far enough. If any one place in the United States grabbed a disproportionate share of public investment, it was not the South and West but New York City: the aptly named FDR Drive, the George Washington and Triboro Bridges, the public housing of East Harlem and downtown Brooklyn, and many other monuments. Was this also part of a coherent plan to redevelop the country? Or was it simply a reward to loyal Democratic voters? A state-by-state analysis of where the New Deal's money was spent would show that underdevelopment mattered a lot less than overendowment in the Electoral College.

Nor is it true that the New Deal devoted its resources primarily to "investment." The hunk of money that traveled south to build the TVA was equaled by the lavish regular stipends paid to cotton farmers by the New Deal's agricultural programs, programs that not even Bill Clinton could characterize as "investment." Schwarz also pays scant attention to the most successful of the New Deal's spending programs: the great rearmament

Mr. Frum is an associate editor at Forbes *magazine.*

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begun in 1938, with the purpose not of creating an aircraft industry in Washington and California but of beating the Germans and Japanese.

Schwarz's book suffers because it was written with an eye too much cocked at the present political situation. Schwarz believes in public investment. He thinks it works, that the money won't be wasted, that nonconsensual exchange presided over by smart young lawyers in Washington really is the most efficient way to mobilize a nation's resources. He regrets the passing of public investment, which he blames on the inflationary pressure of the Vietnam War and—I need hardly say—the Decade of Greed.

Still, if the lesson *The New Dealers* means to teach is not quite so convincing as its author supposes, there is another lesson embedded in the book that we all might profit from. It's worth remembering how much the New Deal owed to regional resentment, and—in these days when even chaste free-traders are being seduced by protectionists' wiles—where that resentment came from. If Southerners and Westerners felt exploited by Eastern capital in the 1930s, they had just cause. For sixty years, high tariffs had raised the prices they paid for manufactured goods from the Northeast and Midwest. At the same time, because foreigners could not earn American dollars by exporting to the U.S., foreign demand for Southern and Western commodities was depressed. The result: prolonged regional resentment, sectionalized politics—and a burning zeal for revenge. The opportunity for that revenge arrived in 1932. From then on, until the New Deal coalition collapsed in the 1960s, Republican states would subsidize Democratic ones. Not a very nice way to practice politics: and a valuable warning of the long-run political consequences of protectionism even now. □

FILM

The Past Recaptured

JOHN SIMON

HOW does an action director handle an inaction movie? How does a kid from the mean streets direct a picture about genteel upper-class New York in the 1870s? Will it be like unleashing Jesse James on Henry James? Or will Martin Scorsese find a way of making love not war to Edith Wharton's prose? I am happy to report that ***The Age of Innocence***, though not quite a knockout, wins on points.

I must make the shameful confession of not having read Edith Wharton, though I have always suspected I would like her, if for no other reason than as an antidote to Henry James. So I came to this movie with the disadvantage of unpreparedness, of not knowing more than the average moviegoer, who may have heard of *Ethan Frome* (or *Ethan Fromme*, as the press kit squeakily puts it), but who certainly hasn't read *The Age of Innocence*. This may have proved, in the event, an advantage, for I kept hoping against hope that the principals would not end in quiet desperation: that the terribly well-bred and enormously eligible Newland Archer and the lovely but semi-besmirched Countess Ellen Olenska would find the courage to do the unthinkable—defy the proprieties, kick over the already loosening conventions, and head for a life of unwedded bliss in Paris or the South Seas.

The best thing to announce about the film is that it looks, plays, and feels like nothing the Merchant–Ivory team of oxen could have plowed up with their plodding, methodical obtuseness. The somewhat less good news is that Scorsese, striving hard to get away from the mendacious Gates of Ivory, ends up a bit out of breath. He certainly leaves viewers breathless as they try to keep pace with a movie that seems terrified of lapsing into the doldrums of respectability, into the pace of drawing-room conversation rather than the propulsion of a boxing match or a Mafia caper. Yet hard-pressed by the stasis of his material, he sometimes has the good grace to succumb to moments of stillness.

Nevertheless, watching the film is an exhausting experience. The director tries to make the material more

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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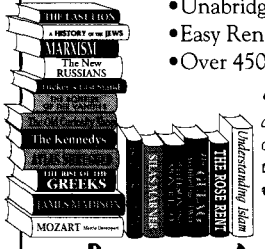

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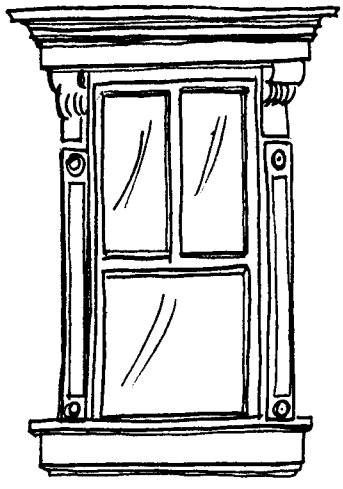
cinematic in three ways: he keeps the characters on the go, or at least pacing about; he gives the camera a steady workout, sending it scurrying hither and yon, and frequently cutting on the move from one bit of kinesis to the next. Sometimes you feel as if you were on a people mover going one way, while the film was on a conveyor belt going in the opposite direction. The cross fades between scenes in the sound editing reinforce the sense of speedboats that pass in the night, and although this tempo is not right for the inertia that is one part of Mrs. Wharton's subject, it is right for the other: the attempt to escape the forces of conformity driving this society. Thirdly, Scorsese directs his principals to convey pressures from within propelling their speech and movements.



This is not without interest for the viewer, and does help set off the moments of quietude. But the film can be dizzying even when Newland Archer is doing no more than looking at pictures at the Louvre. All the same, *The Age of Innocence* never falls into the sort of Merchant–Ivory amateurishness where you feel that a text is being illustrated instead of lived. Yet both Michelle Pfeiffer, as the separated but undivorced, dashing but ineligible Ellen Olenska, and Winona Ryder, as her cousin, the sweet but pedestrian May Welland—Archer's fiancée, with an unsuspected instinct for manipulativeness—have problems with their speech. Miss Pfeiffer seems to be urging her words along with a whip, as if they were circus horses being made to perform stunts; Miss Ryder strains for well-bred maidenliness and ingénue deliquescence, and becomes a mite gooey.

Still, these are not grave matters, and the supporting roles are filled with an Anglo-American cast that blends just about seamlessly. Especially notable are Alec McCowen as a smugly gossipy old bachelor, Mary Beth Hurt as an anguished wife, and Richard E. Grant as a social arbiter of exquisite odiousness. And it is nice to glimpse for the last time the late, beloved Alexis Smith. Everyone is good, even the unseen narrator, Joanne Woodward, whose reading steers a middle course between solicitude and reserve.

Narration of any kind, however, is a dubious blessing. It does allow Jay Cocks and Scorsese, who collaborated on the screenplay, to bring in a good deal of welcome Wharton prose; but it often sounds like someone reading out the stage directions while a play is in progress. There is an attempt at originality even here, as when the narration, as it were in mid sentence, glides into dialogue and action. This is only a mite self-conscious; more bothersome is when a letter on the sound track is begun in the voice of the reader, then continued in that of its writer, or vice versa, or when what starts as a letter suddenly turns into an acted-out scene. But better to err on the side of artfulness than on that of banality.

What holds the movie together is the performance of Daniel Day-Lewis as Newland Archer. As in a double exposure, the actor manages to convey both what the character is saying and the very different things he is thinking, and even the things he himself is not aware of thinking or feeling. Yet these warring emotions are conveyed not in sequence or even juxtaposition, but in perfect fusion. Compare his way of suffering with that of Miss Pfeiffer: she does everything she can, and she looks wonderful when she is distraught. But she comes across merely harried, buffeted; Day-Lewis, under a brave or dazed façade, is clearly collapsing inward.

Scorsese has paid fine attention to the look of things. Shooting New York City in Philadelphia and Troy, and Paris in Paris, he makes me believe that this is the 1870s, and as they were already somewhat nostalgically, but also bitterly, recollected by Mrs. Wharton a half-century later. An evening at the opera (*Faust* in Italian, as it well might have been) or a fancy dinner party is scrutinized with equal ritualistic fervor; the food, prepared under the supervision of Rick Ellis, a culinary historian, and shot by Michael Ballhaus, the superb cinematographer, makes your taste buds stand up and cheer. But even as the sound of a roast duck being carved resonates crunchily from the screen, you are allowed to feel that all this overindulgence is compensation for the other freedoms denied this society.

Equal attention has been lavished on décor and costumes, for which Scorsese imported the talented Italian duo of Dante Ferretti and Gabriella Pescucci. The clothes are sumptuous without seeming ostentatious, and the sets, never much dwelled on, reek of authenticity—note especially the brilliantly chosen art works on people's walls. An experienced vocal coach (Tim Monich) and consultant on manners (Lily Lodge) also contributed to the feeling of not just looking at the 1870s but being inside them. Indeed, there is a certain fanaticism afoot here: cigar smoking is anatomized in choreographic detail; the wood burning in the fireplaces is not just a visual refrain, not just an occasional ominous rumble as a particularly fat log crumbles to ash, but also: a faint obbligato humming behind the conversations even when the grate is not in the frame.

I cannot quite believe Archer's final act of abnegation, which may be my fault, the filmmakers', or Mrs. Wharton's. In fact there hovers over this entire sad tale a slight sense of the contrived, the *voulu*, as if some sort of Providence were watching over these characters to make sure that nothing comes out right for them. Where Scorsese is definitely to blame is in the music, which is by Elmer Bernstein, a typical Hollywood hack; its churning out of grandiose platitudes undermines everybody else's fine efforts. What a chance was missed here to press into service the works—particularly the chamber music—of American composers of the period, say, George Chadwick and Arthur Foote. Still and all, the film makes you feel acutely for its characters; of how many current American—or other—movies can that be affirmed?

■ I fear that the Polish director Agnieszka Holland and the Polish composer Zbigniew Preisner missed the mark with ***The Secret Garden***, and have turned it partly into a sugary Disney concoction, partly into a *Wuth-*

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ering Heights, junior division. I suspect that both tendencies lurk inside Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel, but it was still a mistake for the American producers, having otherwise picked mostly British forces, to put two such melancholy Poles into key slots.

Even the children, who have always proved irresistible in British movies, are a notch or two below the norm. But there is serious overacting from Maggie Smith as the stern housekeeper Mrs. Medlock; she is, in fact, almost as hammy as a robin redbreast (is it always a real bird or, sometimes, a mechanical one?) who steals scenes shamelessly. Most unfortunate is the thoroughly unprepossessing John Lynch as Lord Craven, the lugubrious guardian; about the only good thing I can say for him is that he is not Mandy Patinkin, who played the role in the Broadway musical.

Finally, beloved as it may have been by little Edwardian girls and their Anglo-American female offspring, the novel itself is really not much. The best children's books have been written either by people who had other talents as well (and were, perhaps, a bit crazy), such as Lewis Carroll, or by authors who weren't writing primarily for children (even if they pretended otherwise), such as Mark Twain. □

DELECTATIONS

To Market, to Market

LINDA BRIDGES

MY OLD first-year French textbook was of the kind that attempts to give the students a feel for the texture of everyday French life while teaching them the language. We read about Robert Martin, an American exchange student, and his Parisian friends Marie and Jacques Dalembert; many of the incidents were fairly yawn-making, though we did find titillating the one in which Jacques tells a reluctant Robert that with *choucroute garnie* one simply has to drink beer.

But there was one real culture shock for us Angelenos, who had grown up with nothing but supermarkets: the scene in which Mme Dalembert was laid up with the flu and Marie had to go shopping for her. Or rather—for this was no one-stop shopping—she had to "make the rounds" (*faire les courses*): the greengrocer, the fishmonger, the sausage man; the butcher, the baker, and, practically, the candlestick maker (the authors actually sent poor Marie to the ironmonger's, so as to teach us the immensely useful word *quincaillier*). And someone had to make all or some of these rounds every day, because Mme Dalembert refused even to buy a fridge. Marie thought it incredibly primitive, and we agreed.

When I came to New York I started to shop the modern way, until the day I needed a bunch of leeks, which were evidently too exotic for any of the local supermarkets. And so I wandered into A. & C. Trentacoste, Greengrocers, and nearly walked right back out. If Southern California supermarkets seemed too impersonal and antiseptic, this went to the other extreme. Except for the refrigerator case with salami and cheese, the shop—a corner grocery as well as a greengrocer's—looked as if it hadn't been altered since the turn of the century. And it was not serve-yourself; you had to give your order to the men behind the counter, one of whom was yelling on the phone to an about-to-be-former customer, who was accusing him of adulterating her (factory-packed) Martinson's coffee.

It sounded like a madhouse, but the leeks were good; and it turned out that the yelling was mostly theater. The irascible customer was an elderly shut-in whose main recreation was fighting with Tony Trentacoste. (Every time he canceled her account, his younger brother, Charlie, would let her reinstate it.) The shop indeed dated from the turn of the century, and Tony and Charlie had grown up in and above it. They loved talking about produce, and I learned a lot from them—what to look for in asparagus; what the various kinds of onions are for; how to care for a basil plant.

Also, I enjoyed the show. There was, for example, The Case of the English Muffins. The distributor required a minimum purchase, and so the Tren-

Miss Bridges is NR's managing editor.

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(required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1A. Title of publication: NATIONAL REVIEW.

1B. Publication no.: 374-120.

2. Date of filing: September 22, 1993.

3. Frequency of issue: Bi-weekly except only one issue in January.

3A. No. of issues published annually: 25.

3B. Annual subscription price: $57.00.

4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016-4178.

5. Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business offices of the publisher: Same.

6. Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher: Edward A. Capano, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016; Editor: John O'Sullivan, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016; Managing Editor: Linda Bridges, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

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8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None.

10. Extent and nature of circulation:

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1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	4,372	3,110
2. Returns from news agents	15,138	16,397
G. Total (sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A)	223,864	245,000

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tacostes gently pushed them. If you didn't eat English muffins, that was fine; but if you did, you were expected to buy from them. One day a regular customer asked for arugula, which was not yet common, let alone a cliché. Tony started to fetch a bunch, asking as he went, "Would you like some English muffins?"

"No thanks," the woman replied. "I just bought some at Gristede's" (the supermarket across the street).

"I'm sorry," said Tony, turning back. "We don't have any arugula."

"But you just said . . ."

"That was before *you* said you bought English muffins at the chain store." (The woman eventually got her arugula, along with a nice four-pack of Thomas's.)

Too soon, the Trentacostes retired, leaving the neighborhood to the new wave of Koreans. It wasn't *their* fault that you couldn't say to them: "Charlie, the recipe is Sicilian, and it says small eggplants. How big is small?" Not their fault, but still not the same.

Then came the Greenmarket. These farmer's markets, in several locations around the City, are run by the Council on the Environment, which sounds suspect. But in fact they're like the outdoor markets in most French and Italian good-sized towns. Truck farmers from the surrounding areas (plus a few fishermen) bring their own produce, freshly gathered. It's like going to a series of country farmstands. But even while evoking the country, the Greenmarket demonstrates the point of a city: people meet in it from all points of the compass. To "make the rounds" by car—to the tip of Long Island's North Fork, across the Verrazano Bridge and down to the southern tip of New Jersey, up through eastern Pennsylvania, into the Catskills, and then back to Manhattan—would not leave you much time to enjoy your booty.

As it is, at the height of the season a tour of the Greenmarket is likely to take an hour. So far from anxiously hoping someone will have what you want, you can stroll critically, choosing the best of three purveyors' lettuces or chard, rejecting tomatoes better than the ones that shoppers at glitzy uptown stores elbow each other aside for. Nationwide (and indeed worldwide) food distribution has its points; it levels out the availability of produce across seasons and locales. But as with most things, it is easier to level down than up. Tomatoes picked green enough to stand the trip from Holland or Israel simply can't taste like the ones Cherry Lane picked ripe the evening before; corn that has been handed around from grower to wholesaler to retailer for three days or more can't taste like Samascott's. (I remember Tony glaring at a pint of strawberries one December morning and saying, "One of my customers has to have strawberries at Christmas, but it breaks my heart.")

The Greenmarket is an image of the seasons. A few hardy folk come all winter selling apples and cider, free-range chickens and eggs, pheasants and wild turkey—perhaps a dozen stalls in all. (It will be more like fifty in late summer.) But about Eastertime the juices start to stir, and the addition of even two or three stalls, with barely enough produce to make their trip to the city worthwhile, causes the same excitement as the first robin.

In this part of the world the first asparagus and spinach and strawberries coincide with the first forsythia, and the first slender leeks and hothouse tomatoes with the dogwood; but then we may have to wait till Memorial Day for the arugula and romaine and lilacs. Other items, other sellers gradually appear (currants and gooseberries come and go quickly), until that glorious day in July when the corn arrives, and tables start to sag under piles of eggplant and zucchini, and other tables become mosaics of green, red, purple, and yellow peppers, red and yellow tomatoes, green and pale yellow beans. And since we, unlike Mme Dalembert, have refrigerators, if an unscheduled cantaloupe or bunch of beets won't take no for an answer, we can yield in good conscience. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Case Closed: Lee Harvey Oswald and the Assassination of JFK, by Gerald Posner (Random House, 607 pp., $25)

THIS is *the* book on the JFK assassination, the definitive work that cuts through all the confusion and misinformation. Posner builds an overwhelming evidentiary case that Lee Oswald was the lone assassin, just as the Warren Commission concluded. Using up-to-date computer enhancement of the Zapruder film to determine the number and timing of the shots, Posner explains how the single-bullet theory is not only possible but unavoidable. He faults the FBI and CIA for their clumsy efforts to conceal their own embarrassment over Oswald, whom they should have kept an eye on—but finds no mega-conspiracy beyond that. One of the strongest and most important features of the book, indeed, is Posner's painstaking dissection of each and every one of the competing conspiracy theories. None of them stands up under scrutiny. We can be certain, unfortunately, that this tour de force will be dismissed in some quarters as just another phase of the conspiracy. The mountain of new files being released these days by the National Archives, including FBI and CIA materials, will probably only encourage the nitpickers to sow confusion with what has been released and continue to shout "cover-up" because some intelligence materials are still withheld. But for the non-hysterical, this book will be the end of the debate. —PETER W. RODMAN

Pertinent Players: Essays on the Literary Life, by Joseph Epstein (Norton, 416 pp., $24.95)

A GOOD book review, Joseph Epstein once wrote, is "the product of an interesting mind thinking about a book." A good literary essay, by the same token, is the product of an interesting mind thinking about literature, and there are few minds in the literary firmament today so interesting—or interested—as Mr. Epstein's. In this, his second collection of essays devoted exclusively to various estimable writers of the past, Epstein ranges from the great (Henry James, R. L. Stevenson, Isaac Bashevis Singer) to the enduringly good (Hazlitt, Mencken, Orwell, Maurice Baring) to the quirky (Chamfort, H. W. Fowler, Italo Svevo). These essays, witty, voluminously informative, and perceptive, stand in the best line of *belles-lettres*. While they aren't exactly academic, they are certainly learned, which is infinitely better these days; Epstein mines deeply in search of defining moments and underlying causes and effects in complicated lives, re-

(Continues on page 76)

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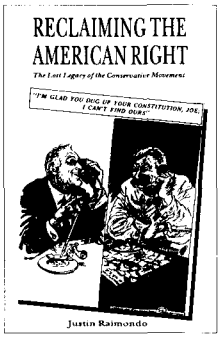

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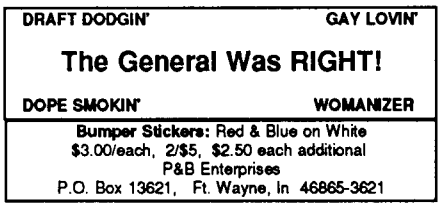

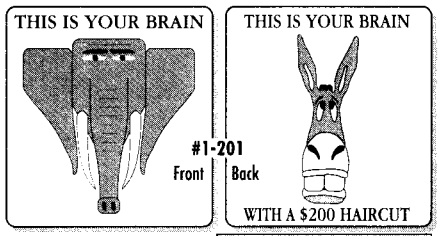

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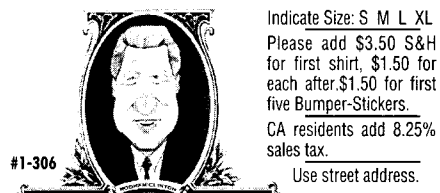

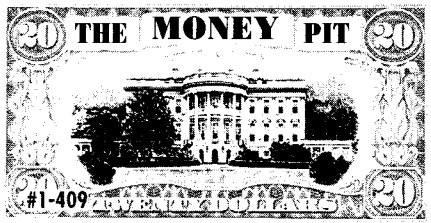

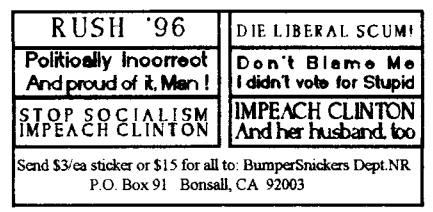
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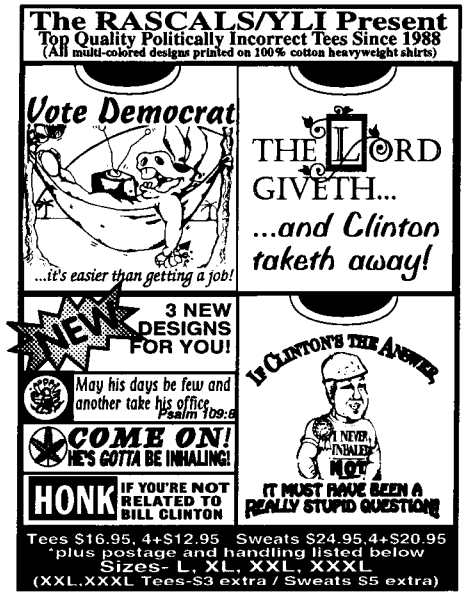
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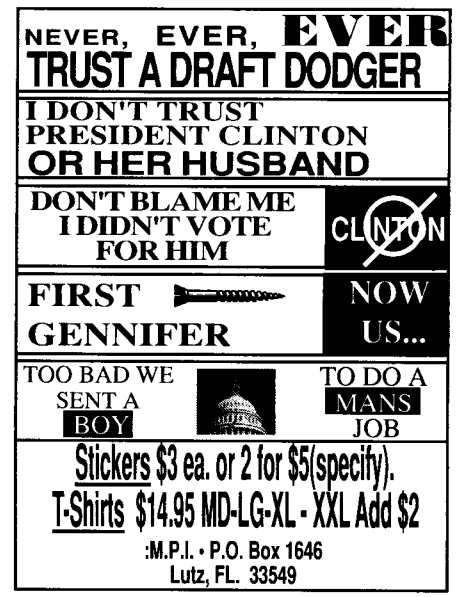
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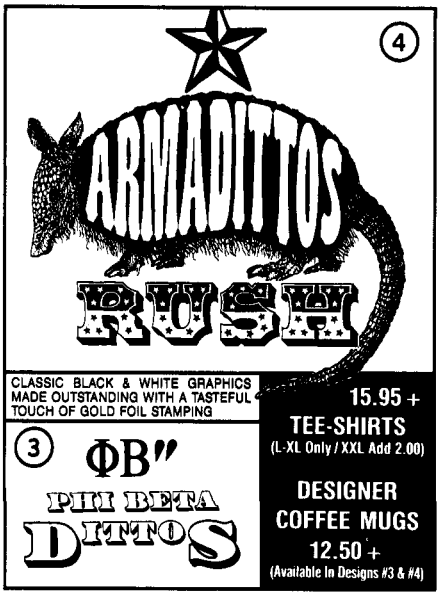

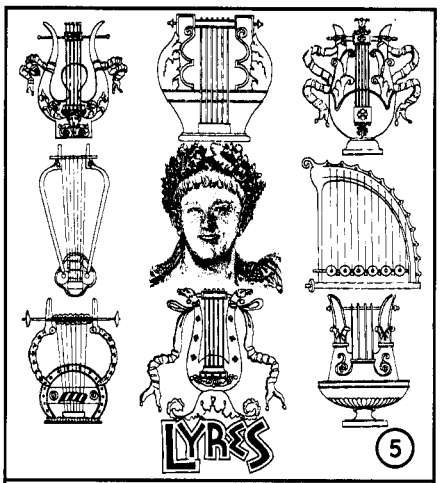
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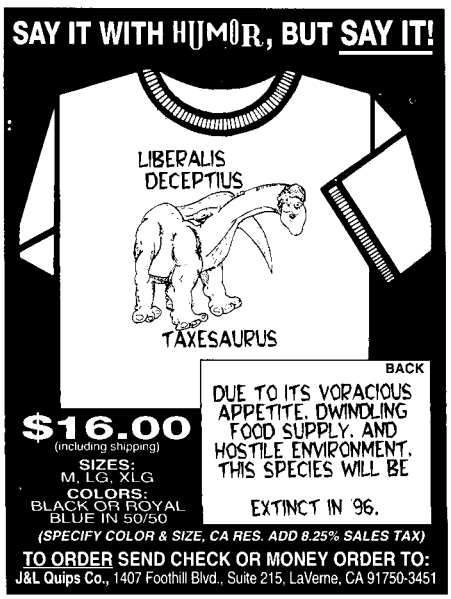
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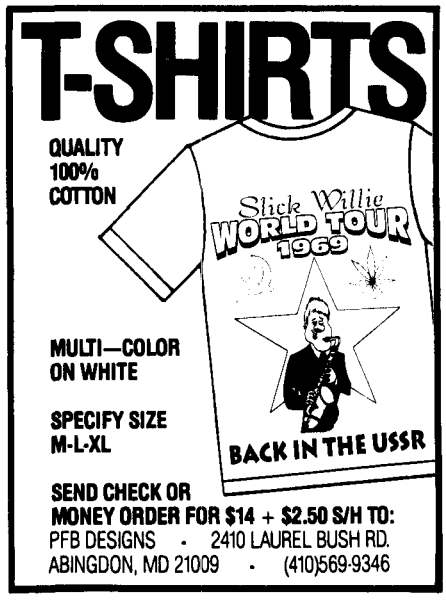

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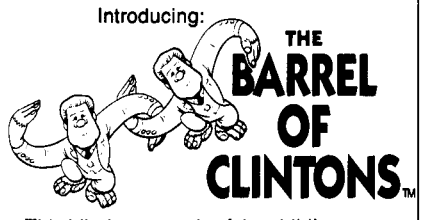

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BRIEFS

(Continued from page 72)

vealing the "mystifying patterns" that refuse to yield easy, certifiable portraits. How invigorating to find an essayist able to examine personalities without rendering diagnoses, one focused on the utter, irreducible individuality of each mind and spirit and their relationship to the writer's work. Epstein, an apologist for the common yet discriminating reader, is persuasive in much the same way that a fine wine is persuasive—the pleasure it gives is its own justification. Life and literature, he tells us, aren't far apart for the person who lives with "a literary point of view, which sees the world as sad, comic, heroic, vicious, dignified, ridiculous, and endlessly amusing"; in other words, the educated literary reader is fully human, an observation as simple as it is true. Such an education is within the grasp of everyone, given enough curiosity, not excepting those holding doctorates in literature. —TRACY LEE SIMMONS

The Night Manager, by John le Carré (Knopf, 429 pp., $24)

EVIL no longer stalks the dark corridors of the Lubyanka. In John le Carré's new novel, "the worst man in the world" is an Englishman named Dicky Roper who wears Gucci espadrilles and Caribbean whites. He is at the center of a worldwide arms-for-drugs conspiracy of the approximate plausibility of an Oliver Stone movie. Jonathan Pine, night manager of a posh Zurich hotel, offers to insinuate himself into Roper's retinue on behalf of MI-6. His final conquest is Roper's mistress, Jed, whose transformation from footloose houri to love-pious accomplice to the saintly Pine is the height of improbabilities. But who said fiction is real life? *The Night Manager* is great fun. Throwaway characters are lovingly described with Proustian excess. Le Carré notes of a small girl, "With her long fair hair brushed down her back, she looked like a child of the French aristocracy on her way to the scaffold." The innocent are seldom spared in the thrillingly sinister world of John le Carré. —CRAIG S. LERNER

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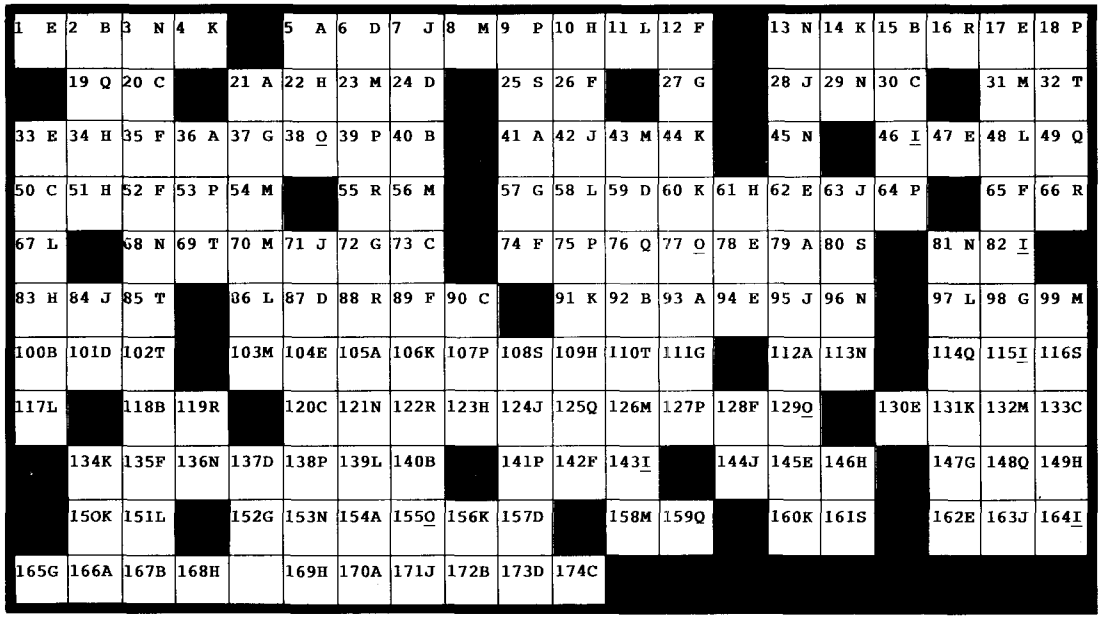
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Bourbon and — (2 words)
112 93 154 36 5 166 41 170 21 79 / 105

B. Real correctness —not PC
140 167 15 118 2 172 100 40 92

C. Manufacturing, or hard work
50 30 90 120 20 133 174 73

D. Like Poe's heart
137 157 101 59 24 87 6 173

E. Small Mississippi city
145 162 130 78 62 104 33 1 47 17 / 94

F. Like some business
52 128 26 35 65 89 12 135 142 74

G. Incendiary-*sounding golf* scoring format (2 words)
147 37 165 152 98 57 72 27 111

H. Gridiron infraction
123 149 34 168 10 83 61 22 169 146 / 109 51

I. Sometimes they are sonic
115 164 82 46 143

J. Sassy
42 28 71 95 124 144 7 163 63 84 / 171

K. Boxer with no punch?
4 160 91 131 150 134 14 60 156 44 / 106

L. Magnet (var.)
48 151 86 117 97 67 58 11 139

M. Showing feeling for another
132 56 31 70 103 43 158 99 8 23 / 126 54

N. The Düsseldorf man
96 113 29 121 68 136 13 81 153 45 / 3

O. Negative admonition
129 77 155 38

P. The skull
53 75 107 9 141 64 138 39 127 18

Q. Throwback
148 159 114 76 19 125 49

R. Caribbean witchcraft
88 119 55 122 66 16

S. Adored ones
108 80 25 116 161

T. Put off
102 69 110 32 85

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS: *He's Taxing*: "The Clinton tax plan is not just bad economic policy. It is constitutionally illegal and destructive of the polity. It will accelerate the growing perception of the federal government as a grasping criminal class of robber barons."

For Vol. II of the puzzle collection, send $5.95 (plus $1 S&H) to: T-Gram Plus, 309 S. Boundary St., Williamsburg, Virginia 23185.

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NAFTA: What To Watch Out For

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 15

When a President manages to bring in three predecessor Presidents, putting two of them them up for the night in the Lincoln Bedroom and the Queen's Bedroom, plus also get surrogate approval from the two missing ex-Presidents, and then the whole lot of them ask for support for a particular measure, there is an awful tickling sensation deep in the bowels of insubordination, that tempts the citizen to react by saying: No! That is the anarchic impulse. It should not be put to sleep—it's good for us, like the Whiskey Rebellion.

But the fact of the matter is that they are right, the North American Free Trade Agreement is in principle a very good thing, economically and politically.

Now here is the one aspect of the treaty that worries the bright dissenters, by which is meant those who understand and believe in the principle of free trade. To tell this story best one reaches for a historical analogy.

Early in his Administration, President Nixon gave thought to a negative income tax. This was, years ago, an epiphany of Milton Friedman, who is the foremost thrush of free-market economics. Nixon packaged the idea as the Family Assistance Plan, and Professor Friedman initially supported it. But as the months went by he discovered that Congress had no intention of creating a negative income tax in place of the whole welfare superstructure. Congress wanted FAP on top of Social Security and Medicare and Aid to Families with Dependent Children and unemployment relief and Head Start, etc. Professor Friedman changed his mind, and Mr. Nixon lost his enthusiasm for it, and FAP died.

There are stalwart enthusiasts for free trade who are increasingly vexed by the accretions on NAFTA. It pays to ask what is the motivation of a group that wants this or that added to the treaty. Is the intention really to clean the waters in and around Mexico City? Or is the intention to diminish enthusiasm for the treaty, so that it can eventually fall off the legislative tree, like a rotten, waterlogged fruit?

The primary organized forces opposing NAFTA are the labor unions and the environmentalists. The union people are arguing that what would result from NAFTA is a loss of American jobs. So they have tacked on to the treaty a provision which can be read as authorizing, or perhaps as compelling, the United States to retaliate if ever it were established that Mexico had permitted a wage reduction designed to enhance competitive appeal. And the environmentalists have insisted that unless the Mexicans follow U.S. guidelines designed to appease nature, economic sanctions would also follow.

Now an accumulation of this kind of thing could lead someone as enthusiastic as Milton Friedman is for free trade to look at a package and conclude: These are damaged goods. . . . We had a perfectly good treaty encouraging free trade. What we have now got is a bloated bureaucratic mess that isn't going to let the market decide what is the best location for the production of Upjohn Mousetraps—Quebec, Tennessee, or Oaxaca—but that is going to weigh hourly wages and discharged particulates, and in effect frustrate the whole enterprise.

Nothing is plainer than that NAFTA is a terrific idea if let alone. As recently as in 1986, the Mexican tariff on some U.S. goods was as high as 100 per cent. Under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Mexico agreed to reduce the top tariff to 50 per cent. Then the Mexicans took it down to less than 20, and the current average is 10 per cent. During that period, the trade balance altered. It had been a deficit of about $6 billion. Last year, a surplus of $5 billion. Our own tariffs are down to approximately 4 per cent.

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In other words, both Mexicans and Americans are getting a better deal than ever before. What we need to convince ourselves of is that NAFTA will not be a setback for free trade. The tariff level is supposed to be reduced over the next dozen years to zero. But zero plus trade-union entanglements plus environmentalist entanglements could have the effect of reducing, rather than increasing, trade. That is what we need to keep our eyes on. □

Fun & Games On The Fighting Front

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 13

Here and there interrupting the squeals of delight and the moans of depression over the ceremony featuring Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat, U.S. journalism entertained itself on points of protocol. At least one likes to think that somebody at the conference featuring The Problem of Arafat's Pistol had a little fun with it. It must have been a venturesome aide who relayed the message that Mr. Arafat should not appear at the White House wearing his holster. We know what would have been the answer of Wild Bill Hickok: "Ah don' go nowear with-at m'pissle." And we know that the very first time Wild Bill consented to sit with his back to the tavern door, he was shot dead as a doornail. It is surprising that Arafat didn't demand the Golan Heights in return for his pistol.

To be sure, it was a ceremonial question. Nobody really expected that if Arafat, surveying the final document, found something in it he didn't like, he'd have drawn his six-shooter and plugged General Rabin. No, it was a matter of protocol. But then so much is a matter of protocol. I was a delegate to the United Nations in 1973 when the foreign minister of Cuba let loose his very best forensic fire on Chile, whose representative returned the courtesy. The official transcript of what then happened reads, "The speaker was interrupted by the representative of Cuba, who attempted to reach the speakers' rostrum, which gave rise to strong protests from other representatives. The meeting was suspended briefly and then resumed."

What actually happened was that For-

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eign Minister Raúl Roa began to walk toward the speaker, followed by four bodyguards. The foreign minister was screaming, *"¡Hijo de puta!"* which means, son of a lady of pleasure, and *"¡Maricón!"* which means gentleman of minority sexual inclination. These happen to be the fightingest words in the Spanish language, and Roa's bodyguards were poised to raise their pistols but were overwhelmed by surrounding delegates. By a masterstroke of irony, at that very moment, a few chambers away, the Sixth Committee of the United Nations was discussing a Draft Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Diplomatic Agents and Other Internationally Protected Persons. The next day it was reported that lots of delegates put in to get pistol licenses. If you can get four Cuban gangsters into the General Assembly, one can envision someone who up until his baptism last week was everywhere thought of as a Palestinian gangster bringing a firearm into the wide expanse of the south garden of the White House.

As if that wasn't enough to distract official Washington, there was the report in the *New York Times* by Maureen Dowd (she is the funny one) on some of the difficulties Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore were having in the course of reinventing government. Their new gut-hunger for national husbandry doesn't harmonize perfectly with their own habits. For instance there was the caller on the *Today* show who asked just why did Mr. Gore need a separate office in Tennessee, to which the answer was along the lines of how glad Mr. Gore was that that question had been asked. There was the question of how come President Clinton felt he had to redecorate the residence and the Oval Office at a cost of $400,000 when the office had just been done over by George Bush at a cost of $62,000, to which the answer was that other people's offices aren't the real You, and in order to be an authentic President, you have to redecorate the Oval Office and, every now and then, the Constitution.

James Pinkerton is a professional Republican who wants the GOP to continue to be accepted as the party for cutting government waste, and he asked why the $79,000 worth of Reagan–Bush Oval Office rugs were wasting away in a warehouse. Why weren't they auctioned off? Well, that question reminded every Democrat to whom it was put about the great diplomatic triumph looming on Monday, when peace, finally, would be brought to the Middle East.

On the matter of that peace there has been some scurrying about establishing historical credit. Every President since Truman has tried to bring peace to the Middle East, but only Jimmy Carter made concrete progress, at Camp David. And Mr. Carter was very much slated to be in town, as also Mr. Bush; and indeed Carter consented to appear on television with Mr. Arafat. Viewers strained to see whether the pistol had been retired, or would it go away only the following day at the White House?

The viewer, as so often happens, is the last to learn what really is going on. □

Revisiting the First Amendment

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 10

Religion is suddenly being noticed, though in odd little ways. Michael Kinsley tells us that people who complain about the silent treatment given to religion don't know how well off they are. He quotes a denunciation or two by such as George Orwell and then says brightly, "See, this kind of thing doesn't happen any more! Therefore, why are the religious-types complaining?" (The answer here is that religion is not attacked in serious quarters for roughly the same reason that astrology isn't attacked: Religion is dismissed as a quaint psychological sanctuary for people who need that kind of thing.)

And then there is some excitement because a great big professor at the Yale Law School—moreover, a black gentleman—has written a book called *The Culture of Disbelief*. Stephen Carter matter-of-factly acknowledges in that book that he and his wife are practicing Episcopalians. He proceeds then with a series of what John Chamberlain once called "stop-loss" statements: devices by which liberal commentators, when they have something to say vaguely pleasing to conservatives, cover themselves by entering sell-orders before their stock dips too low. Thus Professor Carter, while upbraiding certain excesses of the Supreme Court, rushes to agree that a crèche exhibited on public property is indeed unconstitutional, that a benediction pronounced by a rabbi at a school commencement is unconstitutional, and by the way, Ronald Reagan was the greatest affront to religion ever visited upon the United States.

But having assured his colleagues that there is nothing really creepy about him, Mr. Carter does say that the Court has short-sightedly treated religion in the way it tends to be treated these days, namely as a hobby, rather than as a commitment larger than life itself. This is not a fresh point. In a book I wrote 42 years ago, I quoted Canon Bernard Iddings Bell, who said that the treatment of religion by most faculties had the effect of relegating it to a pastime, "preferred by a few to golf or canasta."

Still, it is a vague sign of life that the subject of religion and its place in the civil order should get some attention, and Mr. Carter's book has been publicly cited by the President of the United States, no less, as something that ought to be read. And though not quite directly, the book does raise questions.

In California, Mr. Carter tells us, a situation arose as follows. A couple who are professing Christians have an apartment for rent. A couple who are not married apply to rent the apartment. The owners decline to rent it on the grounds that they do not want to be complicit in living arrangements that violate basic Christian tenets.

Ah, but California has laws that deny to landlords the right to withhold living quarters from roughly speaking anybody under any circumstances. If you put the question, Who here has the presumptive authority to assert his rights, the landlord, or the aspirant tenant? you are likely to run into a little equivocation. I tried it out on the executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, the resourceful Mr. Ira Glasser, and his response was that, without checking into the law, he has the impression that if the landlord has only a single apartment, or maybe two, his rights exceed those of the couple living in sin, or whatever the word "sin" now is under the law, if there is a word for it. But if it is a larger unit, then the rights of the tenant are superordinated. Years ago, they called this the "Mrs. Murphy" exemption. I.e., the widow Murphy, who had the upstairs apartment to rent, could not be asked why she denied it to this or that person, never mind that her reasons might have been racist, or sexist, or religious. But if Mrs. Murphy inherited not an upstairs apartment, but a half-dozen or more apartments, she could not be permitted, so to speak, to extend her influence over the West Bank or Gaza Strip upstairs.

Professor Carter reminds us that the Establishment Clause had as its principal purpose not the oppression of religion by the state, but the preservation of religion against the oppressions of the state. *The Culture of Disbelief* is an ever-so-gentle awakening to the great shifts of emphasis since the Bill of Rights was incorporated into the Constitution. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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Shades of Gray

ASKED if he would like to live somewhere else besides New York, George M. Cohan replied, "Where else is there?"

I feel the same about Southern men: "What other kind is there?" I've been involved with other kinds, but I always felt oddly off-base, as if matters were somehow incomplete and destined to remain so. I suppose I sensed nothing crazy was going to happen, and that's a bad way to feel in romantic situations.

What I like best about the Southern man is his matchless gift for self-parody. He secretly enjoys being the American other Americans are always trying to understand.

In his new book, *New York Days*, Willie Morris tells of being at Gettysburg College for a speech, when all of a sudden he took a notion to see the battlefield by moonlight. He was stopped by a longsuffering security guard who said, "It happens all the time. And it's always Southerners. Why always you Southerners?"

Such questions are music to the Southern man's ears, which is why he's glad the latest New South has become part of corporate America. Millions of Yankees are moving down here now, and they're all trying to understand him.

Knowing that his reputation precedes him, he likes to move in on a Yankee woman and match her preconceived notions of gallant Southern gentlemen. If his wife gets mad he will reply innocently, "I was just being polite," or "She's our *guest*." These are unanswerable and he knows it; hospitality being sacred, his Southern woman must keep her mouth shut while his Yankee woman sits there with hers hanging open, so mesmerized by his megachivalry that she looks pole-axed.

He can, in the words of Georgia writer Rosemary Daniell, "make a woman feel as if she is being bathed in melted butter." He can also make her feel shut out as no other man can. He does it whenever he feels his masculinity is threatened.

As much as he enjoys playing the Southern gentleman, he is painfully aware that the image smacks of the drawing room and the dancing master, requiring behavior that makes him feel foppish. One part of him wants to squire the ladies, but another part wants to escape from them entirely, and so he periodically rebels.

His worst episode is the hunting trip that allows him to go a record number of days without a bath. The idea is to smell bad, so if he can't get away he will go out on the porch and sleep with the dogs.

Another is his frat-rat number, when he hangs out with his friends and everybody gets down-and-dirty in the manner of novels blurbed "All the Fine Young Men."

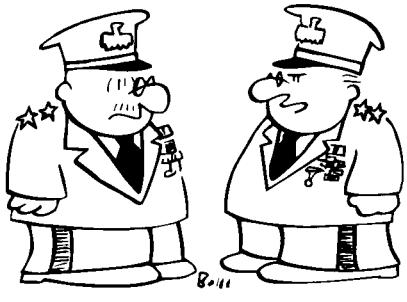
Then there is gun cleaning. Considering the number of guns Southern men own, this can go on for days. It's hard to miss the symbolic rejection in his Smith & Wesson petting parties; the rubbing and caressing he puts into polishing the stocks are bad enough, but wait till he cleans the barrels.

Next he inspects his various collections. He still has the old cigar box containing his boyhood treasures. These include standard little-boy items such as baseball cards, marbles, and penknives; but scattered among the ordinary mementos are things that only a little Southern boy would save: a frog's skull, a cameo watch fob with half the face sliced off, and the skin of the snake that bit him.

Finally, he opens the trunk containing buttons stamped CSA, faded flags full of bullet holes, torn epaulets, and crumbling scraps of blood-stained gray cloth. As he sifts through these talismans, his mood of bittersweet sadness is impenetrable.

All men occasionally shut women out, but Southern men are more unmistakable about it. A man who holes up with paperwork from the office might actually be doing something that must be done right away, but when a man ignores you to polish his great-granddaddy's sword, you know you're *de trop*.

His psychosexual conflicts can be extreme, but they defy psychiatric sophistry. Far from being a "latent" homosexual, he has an unusually strong identity, for he is the South personified: simultaneously a female oasis of gentility and grace, and a male wasteland of taverns and guns, both vying for the accolade of the "real South."



"Did you ever have one of those days when you felt like nuking everybody?"

SOUTHERN MEN and psychiatrists are creatures from different planets. They don't even speak the same language. In *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, Bertram Wyatt writes, "Honor, not conscience; shame, not guilt; were the psychological and social underpinnings of Southern culture."

This is why the Southern man feels he has given a thorough accounting of himself when he "explains" a fist fight or a sudden job resignation with: "I had to." Some corner of his heart will always be consecrated to Edmund Ruffin, the South Carolinian who fired the first shot of the Civil War at Fort Sumter—and who, when he received word of Lee's surrender, wrapped himself in a Confederate flag and shot himself.

Why? He had to.

Present Presidents excepted, the Southern man navigates by fixed stars. There's no telling what he might do if he gets riled, but he says grace and he says ma'am and he loves his countries—both of them.

—FLORENCE KING

Miss King's first book, Southern Ladies and Gentlemen, *has just been reissued in paperback (St. Martin's).*

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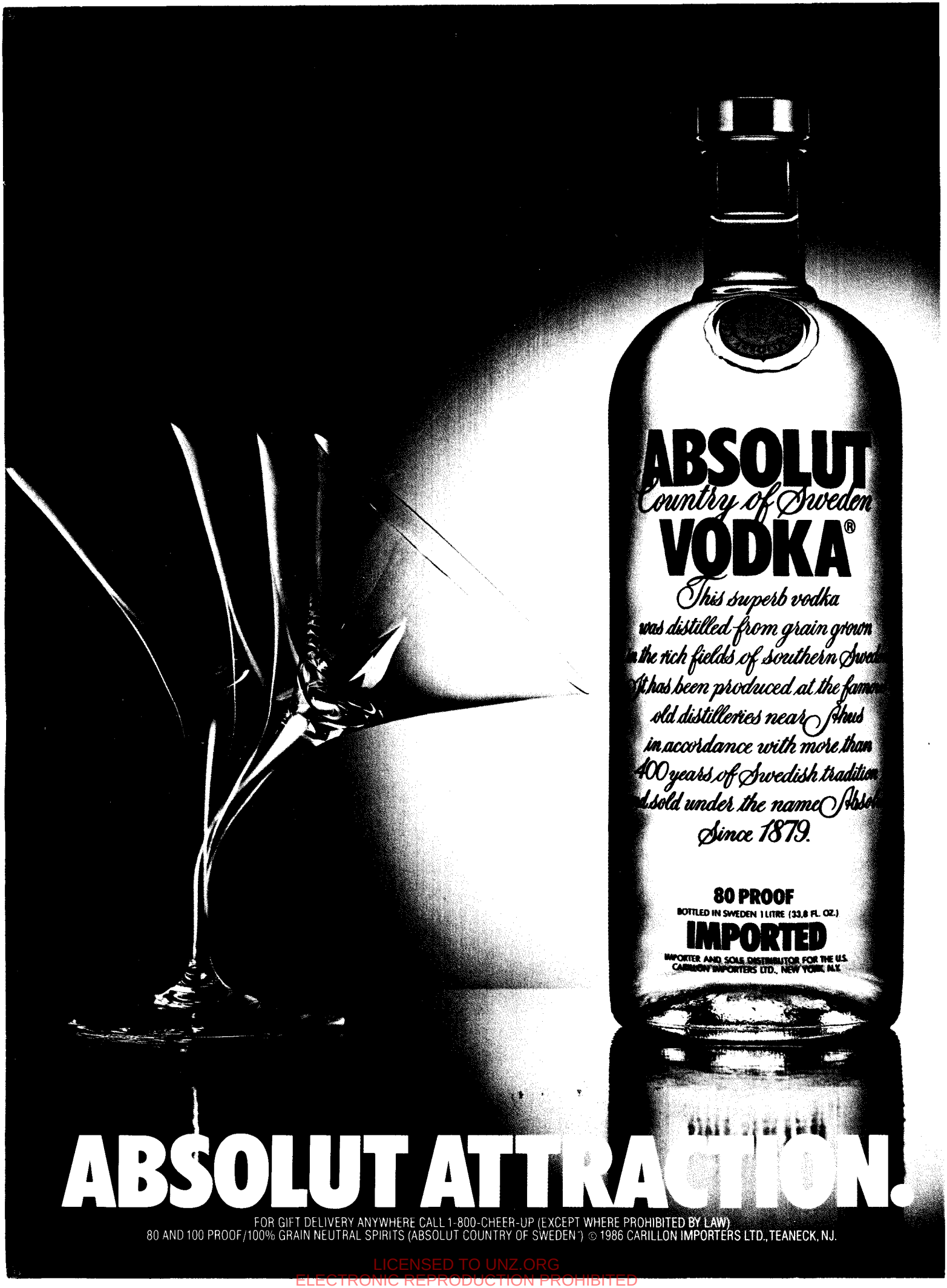
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